

privilege of seeing the latest additions which the director has provided for his visitors. These consist of some interesting plants which appeal more to the sense of smell than the sense of sight, and whose leaves emit a fragrance of their own. There are pots in the Alpine Plant House which contain plants from all quarters of the globe which have an aroma in their leaves. Some of these are the source of our perfumes, and some are used in medicines.

AN oak tree at Allonville, Bellefosse, in North of France, has reached the age of 1000 years, and is so big that nine men can barely circle it with extended arms. In its trunk are cut two chapels one above the other, in which forty children can stand. A stairway leads round the tree to the upper room.

A RECENT visitor to Moscow was very much attracted by the young girl engineer in charge of the switchboard at the radio station in "The Palace of Labour" in that city. This young girl had complete control of operations for this particular broadcast, and the authorities stated that she was one of the most capable technicians on the staff—never at a loss when anything went wrong, and fully conversant with every technicality of a very important job. Such positions seem particularly suitable to the modern girl, whose scientific knowledge has taken her beyond the realm of domesticity, and it would appear that yet another field has been opened up to the so-called weaker sex.

IN the country districts of Australia and the United States of America many girls have qualified for admission to the select ranks of amateur transmitters, and before many years are passed I think we may expect almost as many girl operators as there are girl guides.

TWO young women in Paris have made it their hobby to take down in shorthand all the talks and commentaries given from a Government Broadcasting Station in Paris. A few hours later the text, neatly typed, is sent to the respective authors. There is also a boy of fifteen years in the Landes Department who has filled 200 copy-book pages with records of what he has picked up on his receiver. This reveals another revolution brought about by radio. Ten years ago the copying out of 100 or even 50 lines was considered punishment.

ALTHOUGH the garden benefits by the daylight saving, one has reasonable ground for complaint that our Australian neighbours have not advanced the clock also, when they broadcast entertainment that attracts the attention of New Zealanders. Half an hour does not seem much, but listening to radio until midnight is something to which we are not accustomed. Last Saturday night I was fortunate enough to hear an announcement that the Australian network programmes were to be cancelled in order that Dame Sybil Thorndyke and her company could broadcast throughout the Commonwealth "The Merchant of Venice" on the following evening. I have not seen Sybil Thorndyke since I was in Eng-

land ten years ago, and the excellent thrill was one that I simply could not miss. Miss Thorndyke has been the leading Shakespearean actress since Ellen Terry and her radio delineation of Portia was one that I shall long remember. I am not aware if the company intends visiting New Zealand on this tour, but if they do it is to be hoped the Broadcasting Board will be able to make arrangements for a Sunday night presentation of some of this talented company's repertoire.

SOME new and seasonal publications have just been received from Ward, Lock and Co. Among them are four books for children which would make ideal Christmas gifts. "The Road to Adventure," by Mary Grant Bruce, is one that will appeal to most boys and girls. The adventure in this story is a circus with which Hugh Russell, the son of a farmer, gets mixed up. The scenes are laid in Australia before motor-cars made their appearance, and when horses played a great part in the

means of transport. Hugh gets many thrilling experiences after joining the circus, and our young readers will get a thrill, too.

"THE Cruise of the Crazy Jane," by Isabel M. Peacocke, is a book that will delight all boys and girls who are fond of the sea and yachting. "The Crazy Jane" is an old motor tub which some New Zealand children used for coasting from one bay to another. While camping on the shores of one of these bays they were surprised by the sudden appearance of a boy who desired the loan of their boat to reach his home further up the coast. Being good-natured children, they agreed to take him, and in doing so became involved in some exciting adventures which keep the reader enthralled from start to finish.

SOMETHING that will interest the small boy is "My Picture Book of Red Indians," by Golden Picture Books. This contains splendid descriptions of the habits and employments of these people in simple language that will be a joy to the small reader. Another book for the Tines is "My Favourite Story Book." This is one of the "Bunny Book" series, and will gladden the heart of any wee girl or boy who is lucky enough to receive this as a Christmas gift.

FOR the adult who wishes for a book of light fiction, I can recommend "Follow the Lady," by W. H. Lane Cranford. This book is full of humour, and would be a welcome addition to one's holiday reading matter. There are many complications which arise from two unexpected visitors, who spend the night at the home of Michael Martindale, and of a baby who is left on the doorstep of this bachelor's residence in the early hours of the morning. The unravelling of this tangle of events makes a good story brimming with fun and humour.

"LOTTERIES and Sweepstakes: An Historical, Legal, and Ethical Survey of their Introduction, Suppression and Re-establishment in the British Isles," by C. l'Estrange Ewen (Heath Cranton), is a book that should intrigue everybody who goes in for these excitements. It is interesting to examine the history of lotteries, and Mr. Ewen has done this on a big scale. There have been other attempts to deal with this subject. A history of English lotteries was written by John Ashton nearly forty years ago, but it omitted much, and these omissions have been filled up by Mr. Ewen in a comprehensive manner not likely to be superseded. Having touched briefly on very ancient lotteries, he deals in turn with English lotteries from 1567, and devotes much space to State lotteries, which were stopped by Act of Parliament in 1823. Legislation, however, was circumvented by art union draws, prize draws, bazaar raffles, newspaper guessing competitions, etc. Mr. Ewen decides that unchecked lotteries may be as harmful as betting, but that little harm can be traced to any lottery or sweepstake organised under sound auspices, and that any evil has been completely outweighed by the benefits derived therefrom. It is as a book of reference and not of ethical deduction, however, that will give this work a place in every library.

Prize Poem Competition

(Conducted by "John O'Dreams")

THE prize of half a guinea in the current competition is awarded to "Linn" for the lovely "Lament," which pulsates with that wistful regret and abiding sense of vanished happiness which, alas, are common to the human heart. Next in order of artistic accomplishment is placed "Merrie's" "To an Unknown Violinist," this being a beautiful and rhythmically phrased expression of response of sensitive spirit to the musician's art.

The poems appearing in the "Radio Record" since the inception of the Poets' Corner have appealed to me as being of such beauty, humanity and charm that for some time past it has been my desire, and that of many other lovers of literature, that they should be available in less impermanent form. This desire is now to take shape in the form of a small volume of the verses selected for publication each fortnight. Particulars of our literary venture will be found on page 23 of this issue, and I hope the readers of and contributors to this column will be as much gratified at this outcome as is John O'Dreams.

From correspondents: I would like to say how much I liked "Szigeti" by "Karakia," who catches the musician's true atmosphere.—Merrie. "I find the Poets' Corner a little oasis: it's something to look forward to every fortnight."—C.A.L. "Some of the prize-winning poems make instant appeal. 'Farewell, my Friend,' 'The Blind Potter,' the 'Blackbird' poem, and others, one is glad to think are going to be published in more lasting form. I would like to see 'Merrie' again a prize-winner."—O.E.H.

"Lost": A harmony of simplicity and childhood in the Wordsworthian manner.

D.P.: "The Story Teller" is a quite lovely example of your talent.

A.D. sends lines anent the shimmering heather, so loved, so mourned, by exiles from Bonnie Scotland, the sentiment being true, but the treatment unoriginal.

"The Blind Artist": Good for a little youthful maiden, but the path of perseverance must be well trodden before a place in the sun is secured. Babe: You wrestle courageously with a big subject, the first verse being the more effective.

A.J.R.: Oh, that 'twere possible to print your fascinating sonnet.

"Fantastic Episode": Highly imaginative, strangely chaotic.

O.M.S.: The elegy to two brave men falls in impressiveness.

C.A.L.: In your work there is always apparent some element that creates interest, but the last two poems miss the mark.

Francis: Say it in prose, or even in slang.



LAMENT

You are not here—though the flame-splashed sky fades to a sombre grey,

You are not here, when the frosty night slips into sullen day;

*You are not here, when the stubborn herd crosses the stones to drink—
You are not here—yet I see you stand tense by the river's brink,
A vibrant shadow of the past—afire with love and joy of living,
Beautiful, alert and gallant-eyed, generous and all forgiving.*

You are not here.—The straying beast sways up the crumbling bank

Oh, you stood guard and held them there, watching them where they drank

*You are not here. Oh, well I know that you have died,
Yet through wet grasses in the sighing rain you press against my side.
You are not here. The new dawns break in glory or in grief,
Yet the slow passing of their ways have brought no comfort or relief.
You are not here. Your amber eyes are locked, and still and cold,
Yet through my sleep, and through the days, you shadow me and haunt me as of old.—Linn.*