

Editorial Notes.

Wellington, Friday, August 18, 1933.

SINCE we published a letter some weeks ago from a correspondent who suggested that the radio talks should be cut out we have received numerous letters from listeners who emphatically disagree with this sentiment. It would seem to be the old, old story of the radio being a shop at which one can only buy one thing at a time—Dutch cheeses for one quarter of an hour, red, white and blue ties for another quarter, and so on. Annoying, of course, if you happen to be wanting red, white and blue ties during the Dutch cheese period, but, on the whole, the scheme works successfully for the majority.

Talks form a definite portion of the broadcast mosaic, and have a value which is not perhaps realised by the person who would have the radio flood the country day in, day out, with the sugary crooning of American jazz kings. New Zealand lies far from the world's cultural centres, but each boat brings to our shores some person who has an interesting story to tell and does so by the obvious means—the radio. Mr. Jones, who sells bootlaces in Taihape, may not be interested in to-day's talk on the Nazis, but Mr. Smith, who keeps a grocer's shop in Invercargill, may listen to it with eagerness. The cutting out of the talks from the chief stations of New Zealand would mean depriving thousands of listeners of their one chance of learning of life and work in countries which they can never hope to see.

It is frequently said that the newspapers mould public opinion—the radio can now share a place with the papers. Radio talks, too, may be classed as sugar-coated pills of education. Although it would not willingly admit it, the public detests anything which attempts to educate it. Any theatre manager who wanted to fill his theatre would not dream of billing a film as "educational." Let him call it entertaining, novel, mysterious, glamorous—the people will flock along. It's just the same with talks. Probably 75 per cent. of them are of definite educational value, but the sauce of novelty, of mystery, of adventure makes them appear as a piquant dish to be talked about afterwards.

Look through the list of next week's speakers—Captain Talbot-Lehmann, Margaret Macpherson, Marjorie Bassett, Dr. Guy Schölefeld—all people who have travelled

the world, studied its people, seen the thousand and one little things that make one country different from another. And these world travellers are to be right there next week

Books to Read

Literature in Demand at the Moment

THIS list, supplied each week by the Wellington Public Library, indicates books that are in general demand at the moment, and may serve as a guide to those readers who are looking for new and interesting literature.

FICTION.

PAGEANT, by G. B. Lancaster.

It will be of interest to readers to learn that Dame Edith Lytton, better known as G. B. Lancaster, came to New Zealand at the age of four, and spent some thirty years in the Dominion. "Pageant," however, her best-known work, is set in Tasmania, where she was born, and deals with the life of a family in the early days of settlement.

RANCHERO, by E. S. White.

A stirring story of Spanish California in the 1840's.

PILGRIM COTTAGE,

by Cecil Roberts.

A romantic story which moves from the idyllic Pilgrim Cottage in England to Russia, outlining the hardships of the Bolshevik regime.

PEKING PIONIC, by Ann Bridge.

This is an enjoyable story of life in the foreign embassies at Peking.

GENERAL.

WILD DECEMBERS.

Clemence Dane's new play about the Bronte family. Mr. C. G. Cochran recently produced this play in London, but after a short run decided, in spite of the excellence of cast and staging, that it held no promise of commercial success and withdrew it. Miss Diana Wynyard, who played Charlotte Bronte, considered the play too fine a one to fail, and took over the production herself, with encouraging results. The play covers a period of about fourteen years and embraces most of the more important and famous incidents of the family's strange career.

THE AMAZING MR. NOEL COWARD, by P. Braybrooke.

In the English theatre to-day there is perhaps no more talented or interesting figure than the actor, author, producer, Noel Coward. Plays, lyrics and revues flow in an ever-changing stream from his pen, all characterised by wit, brilliancy of construction and dialogue, and a certain amount of sophistication.

at the country's microphones, bringing a whiff of the outside world into every suburban sitting-room, making the wife forget her darn-

ing, the husband his daily toil. Radio talks are a vital necessity to New Zealand in its isolation—we must keep them at any cost.

THE newspapers, since the day when the broadcasting of news was first started, have looked askance at the B.B.C. English newspapers were the first to show concern—now the overseas papers are growing equally apprehensive. In his presidential address to the Empire Press Union, Major Astor voiced the general feeling when he said that Press agencies in London were dismayed to see "news which they collected at their own expense, and distributed through an elaborate and costly system, flashed free of charge to their readers. But they see, too, that this news service may be of undeniable benefit to the Empire. The B.B.C., for its part, recognises and agrees that the proper function for this service is not to supplant the newspapers, but rather to whet the appetite of the public for the fully-considered and balanced reports of contemporary events, which only newspapers can give."

THE British Drama League in its short life in the Dominion has spread its net wide, and there is every reason to believe that in five years, or even less, the league may produce, from its ever-growing New Zealand ranks, a star worthy to take a place among the shining lights on the London stage. New Zealand is all too poorly served with plays by professional companies—Auckland with a population approaching the quarter-million mark has not had a really important company playing there since Sybil Thorndike visited the Dominion in the first month of this year—and it would appear that our salvation lies in the fostering of local talent. By this means every town of importance should be able to witness at least half a dozen major productions a year.

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