

# Editorial Notes.

Wellington, Friday, September 8, 1933.

THAT the song of the bellbird should be broadcast (a suggestion that has been advanced in the correspondence columns of the "Radio Record" from time to time) is an idea that has been brought up in Christchurch in the past week. Within 50 miles of Christchurch is an area of about 100 acres of native bush in which there are large numbers of bellbirds. The English nightingale has had his little bit of publicity—why not our own New Zealand songsters?

Mr. R. B. Owen, whose schemes have been responsible for the beautifying of many corners of Christchurch, put the suggestion to the Broadcasting Board. He had been told that there were no insuperable difficulties in the way as a land line could be taken right up to the bush and the conditions were ideal for picking up the song of the birds. Mr. Owen did not think that it would be wise, however, to reveal the natural habitat to the general public, for fear of frightening the birds away. It is understood that large colonies of them are to be found in other parts of the Dominion also.

The suggestion is not new to the Broadcasting Board. It had been in the minds of the service for some years, and with this fresh information the matter is now being given serious consideration. Actually the best way to bring the songs of the birds to listeners would be to record them and then broadcast the records. However, the Board does not possess a recording apparatus, and the only practicable scheme under present conditions would be to utilise the portable transmitter used in broadcasting descriptions of golf matches and similar events. In this way the songs of the birds could be picked up and broadcast to a near-by station where the sound could be transmitted by land line to the main station. It is to be sincerely hoped that any difficulties in the way of the broadcast will be smoothed out and that New Zealand listeners will be able to hear the song of a tuneful little native.

THE need for suitable radio plays and the people to perform in them was stressed by a correspondent to this journal some weeks ago. Australia is now realising the same growing need and the Broadcasting Commission on the other side of the Tasman has decided to offer a

prize for a radio play next year in conjunction with the composers' competition.

But, praiseworthy as the intention may be, one may venture to suggest that it is not radio plays that

## 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.

**Advances of Harriet**, by P. Bottoms.

A study of somewhat selfish adolescent girlhood.

**Almond, Wild Almond**, by D. K. Broster.

A further novel of the Highlands. The action takes place about the time of Culloden, and centres this time around a heroine.

**Gosta Berling's Saga**, by Selma Lagerlof.

The most famous novel of this able Scandinavian authoress. It is set about a century ago in Sweden, and deals with the adventures of Gosta Berling, a pastor, who, disgraced by his excesses of drinking, abandons his living and takes to the life of a wanderer and beggar, roaming the country and falling in with extraordinary characters.

**Hyde Side Up**, by Ben Travers.

A novel founded on the successful play and talkie, "Plunder." It is a farce with the movement of a detective story—murder, burglaries, Scotland Yard, and complicated family relations. It is without doubt one of the funniest books of the year.

### GENERAL

**Death in the Afternoon**, by Ernest Hemingway.

This is a lengthy book dealing with the art of bullfighting, and is illustrated profusely with full-size plates. It is a history, a commentary, and an analysis of a sport condemned by English people, but possessing, as Mr. Hemingway shows, much beauty, much artistry, and infinite fascination.

**And Then Came Larwood**, by A. Mailey.

A commentary on the bodyline bowling controversy.

the Commission wants but a producer with a sound knowledge of not only the simple tricks of sound effects but one who can take responsibility. Australia produces many

plays in the course of a year, but the Commission, while it tries out many producers, does not allow any of them an absolutely free hand. What is needed is a producer of such standing that the Commission can trust implicitly in his good judgment; it should believe him implicitly if he find the Shavian adjective necessary to the tone and character of his script; and it should be willing to let the praise or condemnation fall on the producer's head—let him be the be-all and the end-all of radio plays.

RECENTLY we published the British Broadcasting Corporation's reply to editorial and correspondents' criticisms in certain English newspapers of the Corporation's musical attitude. From our London correspondent we now have the other side of the picture, the newspapers' point of view—and it would seem that the listeners of Great Britain have exactly the same grouches as New Zealand fans.

But there is one cry with which we agree. A correspondent in a London daily cries for less control and more enthusiasm. Let us take the microphone about a bit, he says, and we might echo his cry in our own country. Let our national life find its way into the very bones of the people by means of the microphone—take it into the life of regions and towns and places up and down the country and let us listen to the ideas and feelings of our fellowmen. Let us take the microphone along to a Maori gathering and give listeners all the colour and cheerfulness of a native gathering. It has been done before, you say? Yes, but let us have it two or three times a year, just to keep alive our interest in the world's most intelligent dark race.

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