

HERE AND THERE

MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE AND PROGRAMME FEATURES

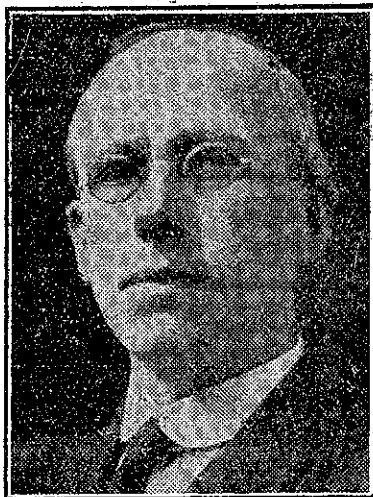
AT the beginning of the 19th century, as is the case to-day, England was the one great power where any sense of personal freedom remained alive. The ancient fabric gradually raised by the wisdom, virtue and courage of our forefathers stood alone. Napoleon's attempt to strike at the power of England in India had been foiled at the battle of Assaye and it seemed that only an invasion of England itself could reduce the opposition to his plans. "Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours," he is reported to have said, "and we are masters of the world." A skillfully designed scheme to divide the British Fleet was frustrated, but an alliance with Spain placed the Spanish fleet at Napoleon's disposal and fresh plans were made for the crushing of the squadron that protected the English shore.

VILLENEUVE, uniting the Spanish ships with his own squadron, drew Nelson in pursuit to the West Indies and then, suddenly returning, hastened to combine with the French fleet at Brest to crush the guardians of the English Channel. A headlong chase brought Nelson up with him ere the manoeuvre was complete, the two fleets met on October 21, 1805, off Cape Trafalgar and Napoleon received the first of a series of defeats that crushed him. In what was destined to be Pitt's last public speech he said of Trafalgar: "England has saved herself by her courage, she will save Europe by her example," and although the Emperor's successes continued his decline began when Nelson destroyed his sea power. Despotism was extinguished in the West for over a century and this turning point in history is being fittingly commemorated by New Zealand and Australian radio stations on October 21.

UNQUESTIONABLY one of the most romantic figures of the Victorian era and one of the most prominently associated with New Zealand was Sir George Grey. Born at Lisbon during the Peninsular War, a few days after his father was killed at Badajoz, he was destined to become a soldier himself, but more a soldier of peace than of war. After serving to a captaincy in the 83rd Foot he joined a Government expedition to explore North-West Australia as leader, and sailed from Plymouth in his friend Darwin's ship, the "Beagle," two days after Victoria

was proclaimed Queen. He engaged in this work with signal success until 1840 when, at 29 years of age, he was appointed Governor of South Australia, and during his period of jurisdiction rescued the colony from chaos and set it on the high road to prosperity. The first Maori war broke out and he was appointed Governor of New Zealand, establishing peace and authority. During this term he refused to proclaim the constitution designed by the British Parliament for the colony.

CHAOS ruled in South Africa and Grey was called in to establish stability, gaining the confidence of whites and natives as he had done elsewhere. Because the Government at Home disapproved of his federation



PETER FRASER, M.P.

plans he was recalled, but later reinstated with orders to drop these plans. Then followed his second governorship of New Zealand, the second Maori war and later his active English public life. Returning to New Zealand he became premier and achieved the unique distinction of ruling in that capacity a country of which he had twice been governor. The federal idea of communion and government was his message to the English-speaking people, and it would seem his original constitution for New Zealand may approach realisation in the future. When Greece was in need of a monarch Sir George Grey's name was

mentioned as an ideal person to fill the position, and few will question the fact that Greece was the loser in not making the request for his services. Sir George Grey's career affords an example of the truth of the dictum, the English were born to rule, and listeners to 2YA on October 16 will hear Mr. Peter Fraser, M.P., recount why he so greatly admires the great pro-consul.

INCLUDED in the programme at 2YA on October 16 is a concert overture entitled "Yelva," which Mr. de Mauny's orchestra is scheduled to perform. This work is entirely new to listeners in New Zealand, the music having but recently been received and so far not recorded. Like other of Reissiger's works it is dramatic in form and radio listeners will be grateful to Mr. de Mauny for his enterprise in securing this music. Reissiger is perhaps best known to the average listener by his pianoforte piece, "Weber's Last Waltz," which incidentally has nothing whatever to do with Weber. He came of a very musical family, his father having three symphonies for full orchestra to his credit.

REISSIGER'S education was along theological lines but some motets composed in 1815 and 1816 attracted his attention and the success he had with his fine baritone voice determined him to devote himself to music. At Munich where he studied he composed the opera "Dido," which was performed several times in Dresden under Weber's conductorship and later at the joint expense of the Prussian Government and his patron, von Altenstein. He undertook a tour through Holland, France and Italy in order to report on the condition of music in those countries. On his return he was commissioned to draw up a plan for a Prussian national conservatorium. He eventually made his home in Dresden where he produced several German and Italian operas and subsequently succeeded Weber as conductor of the Opera at Dresden.

ON October 17 the Scottish National programme of the B.B.C. is to be presented at 3YA and it is interesting to note that no specimens of Scottish national folk music existed before the early part of the 17th century. There is no denying that Scotland was a musical nation, and there is every reason to believe that it was in no way lacking in musical beauty as later examples show. There is strong evidence that many of the tunes that did not see the printer until the 18th century are of much earlier date, though lack of manuscript leaves us in the dark for positive proof. There are many early entries in royal and other accounts showing that musical performances were frequent though there is nothing to show that the music was of native origin.

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