

that negotiations are now in hand for the purchase of several instruments. Mr. Tyrer was also able to make arrangements with a number of publishing houses for special-hire music to be placed permanently in the library of the Broadcasting Service. This will relieve the restriction on repertoire formerly imposed by our distance from firms which normally release these works for short terms only.

The Orchestra reassembled in Wellington towards the end of January to commence combined rehearsals for the concert season, which was to commence in Auckland early in March. The Orchestra being better prepared with a larger repertoire and with the benefit of the first year's experience, it was possible to arrange a much more exacting performance schedule than had been called for in 1947. Between 2nd March and 22nd March the Orchestra gave eleven public concerts. Two evening concerts, with the distinguished British soprano Isobel Baillie as guest artist, were given in Auckland, together with a lunch-time concert of lighter music. In Wellington there were three evening concerts, the first two with Miss Baillie as guest artist and the third with John McCaw, a clarinettist member of the Orchestra, as concerto soloist. Two lunch-time concerts of lighter music were given, and the removal of the poliomyelitis restriction on the assembly of children allowed the reinstatement in the schedule of three concerts for school pupils.

The players engaged by Mr. Tyrer in England did not arrive in time to appear at the first concerts of the season, and it was necessary in the meantime to engage local amateur and semi-professional players who, though unable to commit themselves to full-time membership of the Orchestra, were willing to accept a short engagement. The Service is grateful to these musicians and to their employers, whose co-operation enabled the Orchestra to function from the beginning of its scheduled season. By the end of March the newly arrived members of the Orchestra were in their places.

The presentation of lunch-time concerts, comprising lighter orchestral works at a time and price which encouraged a new audience, was an experiment which proved most successful. Attendances were good, and hundreds of people saw the Orchestra performing for the first time. A less-successful experiment was the arrangement of an evening concert of lighter works in Wellington. In addition to a Mozart Clarinet Concerto, such items as "The Blue Danube" and "Peter and the Wolf" with Dermot Cathie, English actor, as narrator, were included in the programme. The fact that public support for this concert was considerably below that for concerts of a more classical tone indicates that the demand for concerts of lighter works is not as great as was supposed.

The number of free concerts for school pupils is being extended this year to permit a proportion of senior primary-school pupils to hear the Orchestra in addition to those from secondary schools. The allocation of seating at these concerts continues to be in the hands of the Education Department.

The second Dominion concert tour by the pianist Lili Kraus was already in progress at the commencement of the year under review. During the tour Madame Kraus gave a total of ten public recitals in the main centres, each recital being broadcast in full.

The next artist engaged for a public concert tour was Isaac Stern, a young American violinist who arrived in September. In the space of ten days he gave six public recitals, appearing in each of the four main centres, and one studio broadcast just before his departure. Stern is an artist of the highest attainment, and his tour was an undoubted artistic success, although the public support for his concerts was not as great as had been hoped.

The concert tour by Miss Isobel Baillie, which commenced in March, 1948, was successful from all viewpoints. In addition to the many appearances with the National Orchestra and with local societies, as mentioned earlier in this report, she gave six public solo recitals, and fulfilled a number of studio broadcast engagements, being received with enthusiasm by concert audiences and radio listeners alike.