

Little Red Schoolhouse

By ELIZABETH DOTSON

The winter of 1945-46 marked the 13th year of broadcasting for the KOAC School of the Air. Thousands of rural school children in Oregon dispelled any jinks connected with the number 13 by providing an estimated audience of 110,000 listeners for these programs. KOAC is Oregon's public-owned radio station located on the Oregon State College campus in Corvallis. The General Extension Division of the State System of Higher Education directs the program service.

The School of the Air provides a series of programs throughout the week for the use of one and two room rural schools. "This program feature grew out of KOAC's vision of what radio could do for rural schools especially," says James M. Morris, director of the series during the last two years. Because of inadequate library service in many rural areas and the limited experiences of rural children, these programs provide valuable supplementary assistance for teachers. Rural schools are, of course, an easier audience to reach than are the larger city schools where departmentalization of subjects makes it difficult to adjust the school schedule to radio broadcasts. Some of the larger cities in the United States are now operating their own radio stations, such as KBPS in Portland, from which programs are broadcast to fit their schools' special schedules. KOAC and similar stations have led the way in this educational broadcasting.

Topping the popularity list in number of listeners is the "Land of Make Believe." For 15 minutes every Monday last winter, 24,000 children journeyed with the Court Players into the land of make believe where their favorite story book characters come to life. These Court Players are Corvallis junior and senior high school students and

KOAC staff members. The plays which Mr. Morris adapts from well known children's stories, are also used by radio station WBEZ operated for the Chicago public schools. With 22,000 youthful listeners just within the city, "Land of Make Believe" is Chicago's most popular school program. These plays will also be used next winter by the Seattle city school station.

Second on the popularity list is "Let's Sing, America"—claiming 19,400 participants. We say participants, not listeners, because in their own schools the student groups sing with the studio broadcasters. Miss Maude Garnett, head of the Department of Public School Music at the University of Oregon, plans and presents these programs, assisted by her own classes in Public School Music at the University. Basic theme of the series is "singing for enjoyment." Each broadcast has a specific theme—songs of the people of other nations, Negro spirituals, cowboy and mountain songs, sea songs and others. Grand finale for the year comes at the time of the last broadcast in May when the children of various schools assemble in McArthur Court on the University campus for a community sing.

"The Beginnings of Things" are five minute answers to children's inevitable questions of "whys and wherefores" of everything around them. This series was given to the station by Mrs. Florence Hornaday Summers, teacher, librarian and newspaper woman, who last year resided in Nyssa. Although Mrs. Summers has left the state, her scripts will be used again next year. The series answered the questions of 10,840 children about the first ice cream cone, the first rubber overshoes, the first apples in the west, and many other "firsts." (Following figures in paren-

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