

1933.
NEW ZEALAND.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

NEW ZEALAND BROADCASTING BOARD,

(FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1932.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in pursuance of Section 21 of the Broadcasting Act, 1931.

R E P O R T.

To the HONOURABLE ADAM HAMILTON, MINISTER OF TELEGRAPHS, Wellington.

SIR,—

As required by section 21 of the Broadcasting Act, 1931, the members of the New Zealand Broadcasting Board present their first annual report.

The Board was set up on the 18th December, 1931, and took over the four stations at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, previously controlled by their predecessors—The Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd.—on the 1st January, 1932, the transfer being effected smoothly.

The question of coverage was deemed by the Board to be the most important of its problems, and a Commission was set up with instructions to report on the subject at the earliest practicable time. Mr. A. Gibbs, M.I.E.E., then Chief Telegraph Engineer, Post and Telegraph Department, and Dr. M. A. F. Barnett of the Scientific and Industrial Research Department, were the Commissioners, and in the course of their investigations they visited some eighty towns and covered over four thousand miles by motor-car in addition to steamer and train travelling. The recommendations of the Commission are mentioned later in this report under the heading "Technical."

It was also considered advisable to issue a questionnaire to each applicant for a receiving license, and much useful information in respect of the programme side of the Service was gathered in this way.

This report is furnished in two sections; the first dealing generally with the year's activities, and the second with finance.

GENERAL.

HOURS OF TRANSMISSION.

When the Board assumed control of the Service, the hours of transmission were at the rate of 10,612 per annum. The hours have been extended by the Board from time to time until at present the four stations are transmitting at the rate of 16,484 hours per annum. Transmissions totalled over 13,000 hours in 1932, and of this time, twelve hours were lost as a result of technical faults and power failures.

PROGRAMMES.

Compared with similar organizations in other countries, the Board's greatest handicap on the programme side is the unavailability of suitable relay lines to permit the relaying of programmes presented at the National Station (Wellington). At the request of the Board, the Post and Telegraph Department is investigating the possibility of obtaining equipment designed to make suitable relay circuits available. In addition, the possibility of rebroadcasting direct the Wellington programmes is being investigated by officers of the Board, in the hope that something may be done in this direction.

Entertainment formed the bulk of programmes, and no effort was spared to secure the services of new artists. The results, however, have been disappointing, for it is the experience that only a small percentage of those granted auditions reach the required standard. While the Board has endeavoured to encourage local artists, it has been forced to the conclusion that the number of artists in the Dominion capable of maintaining a satisfactory standard is comparatively small. This is readily understood, however, when consideration is given to the relatively small population of the Dominion.