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PAINS
BETTER
NOW...**



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CHRISTCHURCH HAS A RADIO FORUM

A NEW session, designed to promote civic pride and to encourage people to take an interest in their city's and the country's affairs, has been launched by Station 3ZB. Its title is *Radio Town Meeting*, but, as the topics discussed have some bearing on the life of everybody in the community, there is no danger of interest being damped by water from the parish pump. The session lasts for half-an-hour, is heard every Sunday at 8.0 p.m., and succeeds the much-talked-and-written-about *Radio Round Table*.

The promoters have no difficulty in finding a subject. They write to listeners, asking for their views on whatever

and after this general discussion, the first speaker has the right to three minutes for a speech in reply. The meeting is not called on by the chairman to give any verdict on the discussion, but listeners are invited to write in to the station giving their views of the broadcast and the argument. From the letters a poll is taken and the result announced at the next *Radio Town Meeting*.

Street-collecting is one of the subjects already discussed. The original letter complained that collections were unfair in their operation, for they covered the city area only. Business people had to dip their hands into their loose change continually, while suburban residents and industrial workers went scot-free.



3ZB's RADIO TOWN MEETING in session. A. G. Sleeman, the chairman, can be seen at the rear (beneath the 3ZB motif on the wall), and the speaker who has the floor is H. A. C. North, chairman of the Christchurch Tramway Board. The subject of debate was the recent increase in Christchurch tram fares.

interests them particularly, and the reply likely to provoke the most definite opinions is selected. The best local authorities on that topic are then invited to attend the studio and take part in a debate.

Two experts are selected to support the motion, or proposal—it may be to abolish street collections, raise the tram fares, or boycott the Commissioner of Taxes—and two others speak against it. The public may attend.

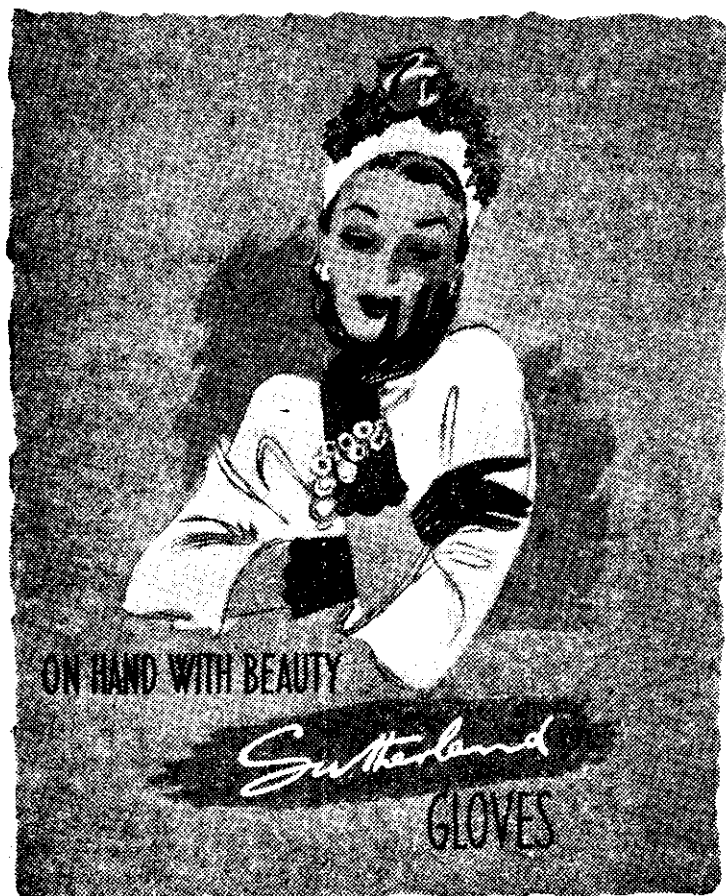
The whole session is conducted on constitutional lines. A chairman reads the letter chosen for discussion and moves that the discussion be opened. The first of the four selected speakers then moves a resolution and speaks in support of it. He is seconded by his team-mate and they are opposed by the other two, who represent the negative side of the debate. Each speaker is allowed three minutes.

The remainder of the session is occupied with questions from the audience.

One suggestion was that the American "Community Chest" idea might be followed. This is a scheme whereby one central collecting agency makes the collection for the year and distributes the funds to the various charities and good works. Another subject was the city's rating system, yet another the dark nights and unburnt toast during electricity cuts.

The station does not keep strictly to a prepared list of subjects as they are suggested by listeners' letters, though these are always ready to be used. Anything that crops up to become the matter of the moment takes precedence. Subjects due for an airing in the near future are Food for Britain, Housing in New Zealand (should the cities play the greater part?), and the amalgamation of local bodies into one central body or board of management.

There has been so much interest in the session that it will probably carry on for some time.



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