

stations that carry Trans-Canada and Dominion Network programmes. The privately-owned stations in the Networks agree to carry network programmes for so many hours each day, but even the CBC owned stations run their local programmes for a good part of their broadcasting time. Generally speaking, Network programmes are the important section of the day's broadcasting, and deal with things which interest the whole country. Because of the time difference between the Eastern and Western Provinces, "network" is not often an accurate description of a programme broadcast across the whole country. West Coast broadcasts are usually delayed two hours. This means a lot of recording and much use of land lines. Britain reaches a population of fifty million with 975 miles of line. Canada needs 15,000 miles of line for her 14,000,000 people. Line time is purchased from three telegraph companies, and the cost is about a million dollars a year, a burdensome expense.

Faced with increasing financial difficulties, massive American competition and the usual hail of home listeners' criticism, the CBC stands sturdily upright and gets on with the job. It is not afraid of being funny, serious, different or receptive to new ideas. Naturally, not every new idea is a good one. The ones that don't work out either disappear beneath roaring waves of criticism or sink without trace in a sea of apathetic silence. But the occasional good idea springs into life and flourishes, gratifying the listeners and justifying the CBC's faith in the continued existence of good ideas.

Wednesday night is the time of trial for the most ambitious ideas. The listener may hear a long documentary on the Pacific Coast Indians, accompanied by their music, a two-hour play on Socrates by a Canadian writer, dramatizations of Stephen Leacock's stories, or the latest work of a young Canadian composer. Wednesday night is not made up of background noises; the listener has to give his concentration.

Problems for Writers

Good ideas, of course, deserve good payment. The CBC does its best to keep alive the writers it encourages, and in an average year pays out nearly two hundred thousand dollars to them. If a free-lance writer is prolific and capable he can just about keep himself, unless he is ambitious and wants to raise a family. He writes with one eye lifting over the border, where competition is murderous but the top few can afford families, television sets and butter on the table. The CBC really means to encourage Canadian writers. During 1949 Western Canada was edified by the spectacle of the programme director of the Trans-Canada Network making a speaking tour in which he urged authors' groups to submit more radio scripts.

Schools and children's broadcasts, and women's hours are cast in forms generally familiar to New Zealanders, but there is a good deal less time devoted to sport. Only three Canadian horse races each year are considered sufficiently vital to be given network broadcasts. Ice hockey gains most attention, matches being broadcast over two networks each Saturday night during the season, but the average New Zealander, raised on NZBS sports coverage, would feel he was on an austerity ration.

The Massey Commission on the National Development of Arts and

OWEN JENSEN STARTS A DIARY

WHEN Owen Jensen decided recently to leave Auckland and settle in the capital he said he believed a musician needed new stimulus every so often if he was to keep his work fresh and continue giving his best. From a talk which *The Listener* had with Mr. Jensen in Wellington the other day it got the impression that he won't be the only one to get stimulus from the change. He had already arranged to broadcast a series of six illustrated talks on music of the unusual, provocative kind with which many listeners will already be familiar, and he was planning a series of evenings with adult education classes which will be part talk, part discussion and part practical work.

Mr. Jensen's new talks, which are to be heard from 2YA at 4.0 p.m. on Sundays under the title *A Listening Diary* (the first of them this Sunday, May 4), will each approach a composer from some unusual angle. They will all be illustrated at the piano and will be followed as soon as possible by a broadcast from 2YC of the major work discussed. The first programme is "The Man Who Liked Bach" and Bach's Suite in B Minor for flute and strings will be heard from 2YC at 7.0 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7. "Many listeners, whether they know Bach or not, think of him in terms of the marvellous technical achievements in his writing," Mr. Jensen explained. "They don't think of the technique of his style of writing as the servant of his feelings. In fact the emotional or romantic element runs through much of his work, and that's the view I shall state in my talk."

In general terms, Mr. Jensen said, his aim throughout the series would be to

Sciences dealt at some length with the activities of the CBC, and as a whole justified its function as regulator of licences and conditions under which private stations operate. This is a sore point with the private stations who argue that the CBC is a competitor and should not therefore be a judge as well. This controversy is certain to be carried over into the television field. CBC starts television this year in Toronto. Private stations claimed they were prepared to start before that time, but were not granted licences. The Massey Commission based its support of the CBC's regulatory function on the ground that broadcasting is not an industry but a public service. Private citizens are permitted to engage in this service subject to the regulation of the CBC, a body finally responsible to Parliament, but they enjoy no vested right to engage in broadcasting as an industry.

The final word has not been spoken here. Whether the definition of broadcasting as a public service stands depends largely on the progress of American influence in Canada. A sign of Canadian strength, written in language Americans understand well, is that at the time of writing the Canadian dollar is at par with the U.S. dollar and likely to go higher. The CBC, which does not limit itself to a dollar rating, can afford to be confident, too.

—G. Ief. Y.

introduce people to unfamiliar music and to bring out new pleasures in familiar music. Whatever a composer might have intended in writing a piece of music, different people heard and enjoyed different things in it. Some of these different viewpoints, and not necessarily those of people concerned professionally with music, would be brought into the talks.

"The Amazing Scarlatti," the second programme in *A Listening Diary*, will be broadcast from 2YA at 4.0 p.m. on Sunday, May 11, followed by Scarlatti sonatas from 2YC at 5.48 p.m. the same day. Hugo Wolf's songs, Debussy and the Impressionists, and "the strange case of Erik Satie" will be discussed in other programmes already planned.

Mr. Jensen is calling the adult education course he will conduct in Wellington this winter *The Making of a Musician*, and he will make it clear that he considers that a musician may be a performer, a composer or a listener. ("Yes, listening is a very highly specialised form of musicianship.") Practical work will include singing and possibly recorder music.

As Mr. Jensen had gone on record as saying that Wellington has "tremendous musical possibilities," *The Listener* asked him if he could say a little more about this without, of course, making any comparisons that would cause offence north of the 38th Parallel.

"Wellington is already a lively musical centre, rapidly developing further,"



OWEN JENSEN
Wellington's Climate Helps

Sparrow Pictures

said Mr. Jensen. "So many musicians have come here in the last few years—not only those in the National Orchestra, but people outside it as well. Then the climate—I know this point is generally treated facetiously, but I believe the climate helps to stimulate interest in music. It's invigorating, and for most of the year people are not diverted by beaches and outdoor life generally." People, too, can also live as a community better in Wellington than in Auckland, Mr. Jensen thinks. Auckland is so spread out that people find it quite an effort to see one another.

TRANS-CONTINENTAL

"WE'RE rather proud of our airline," a public relations man of Trans Canada Airlines told Guy Young before he set out on the 3000-mile flight from Vancouver to Montreal. "It runs every day, it runs on time, and it doesn't kill people." Guy Young tells the story of the flight and of the return journey by rail in *Three Thousand Miles and Back*. Flying at night—"you aren't moving, of course; you're a lighted fish bowl hung in thundering darkness"—Mr. Young went first to Calgary, a town proud of its wild western traditions, then on to Winnipeg, "not a place where I'd care to live," Toronto and Montreal—good places, it seems, which are busy ignoring each other. The rail trip back to Vancouver took four nights and three days, and "in spite of the legend of the bare prairie my strongest impression of the whole journey was trees," one small tree with a pink ribbon and a yellow label and the rest with their own decoration, filling the autumn country with "yellow flutterings, strong stabs of green and hill-sides by the square mile preened in scar-



GUY YOUNG

let." *Three Thousand Miles and Back* will be heard from 2YC at 10.0 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7.