

Home of 3YA Christchurch

High Standard of Efficiency and Comfort

Towering Masts Dominate City of the Plains

In this issue, by word and picture, we feature the Christchurch station, 3YA. In regard to both equipment and studio appointments, everything is of the best. Compared with 2YA there is a contrast in power and style, but not in quality. A glance at our illustrations will show the type of building in which 3YA is located. The headquarters of the company is also in Christchurch. The Broadcasting Company's business occupies the whole of the top floor, most of the third, and part of the second. The equipment throughout has won high praise from visitors, one of whom, with British experience, recently averred that there were no better features in overseas stations.

Though not as powerful as 2YA—which is the second most powerful in the British Empire—Canterbury has a very up to date station in 3YA. It is only five months since the opening ceremony took place, so the station equipment is still the last word in efficiency, and visitors from overseas, who have seen the station of 2LO (London) and others, declare that they have seen nothing better than the appointments of the studio in Christchurch. It is a station of which Christchurch is proud. Not only does the station serve Canterbury and other parts of the South Island admirably, but it is also heard particularly well in the North Island, notably along the East Coast, Bay of Plenty district, etc.

A SELF-CONTAINED STATION.

There is one striking difference between 2YA and 3YA. The Christchurch station may be described as self-contained, for the studios and transmitting plant are under the one roof, whereas in Wellington the studio is in the city and the transmitting station is on Mount Victoria. That, of course, is necessary in the case of Wellington because that city is surrounded by high hills and the power of the station would be largely discounted were it transmitting from the city level. Christchurch, however, is entirely different. It lies on a plain, the nearest hills being miles away. So, right in the heart of the city, Christchurch has two lofty iron lattice-work towers which are a landmark for miles around.

WELL FURNISHED STUDIO.

There is nothing awe-inspiring in a visit to a broadcasting studio. It is like walking into a comfortably furnished drawing room, with grand piano, gramophone, artistically shaded standard lamps, easy chairs and chesterfields. There seems to be no mechanical apparatus such as one would associate with wireless broadcasting. The only things of such a nature are the microphones, and these are very inconspicuous. The necessary mechanism and machinery are just out of sight and sound on the floor above.

The studio, lounge, and smoking room are furnished with taste. The studio is on the fourth floor. Entrance is gained through sound-proof doors.

The studio calls for special mention. It is furnished throughout in Jacobean style and is draped to a height of fifteen feet with rose pink chenille hangings, with skirtings of silver frieze, the purpose being to secure the best acoustic conditions for broadcasting.

The furniture is of rosewood and harmonises beautifully with the colouring of the draping and of the carpet. Both ceiling and floor are padded. In this respect, 3YA studio contrasts with 2YA, where padded panels on the walls take the place of the curtains in 3YA, and the roof of 2YA, being pitched, is not padded.

THE LOUNGES.

Adjoining the studio on one side is the ladies' lounge and the control room. In the walls of both are large plate-glass, sound-proof, windows, which permit of complete observation of the working of the studio. This observation makes the evening more interesting for the artists who are waiting their "call" and it is essential to the announcer in the control room. The whole operation of the station is controlled from this room, which is in direct communication with the operator in the

studio are the ladies' lounge and the gentlemen's smoking room. Both are most artistically and comfortably furnished. A loud-speaker is provided, so that the artists, as they wait their call, can see, through the plate-glass window, and hear, by means of the loud-speaker, all that transpires in the studio. As in 2YA, plate-glass partitions are a feature of 3YA. By their means everyone can see from one end of the building to the other. Plate glass windows between rooms are a distinguishing feature of New Zealand stations.

that the cost of running the system had greatly increased but that there had been no commensurate benefit to listeners. It had not silenced criticism, there being as much as ever.

DETAILS OF THE ROOMS

Although not so large as the splendid rooms which accommodate 2YA in Wellington, the Christchurch studio is in every way extremely suitable for its purpose, the whole building having been very carefully designed to secure the maximum efficiency in transmis-

rose chenille, with a silver frieze round the top. The floor is covered with an attractive fawn carpet, slightly tinged with rose colour; and the furniture strikes a distinctive note, being fashioned of rosewood and upholstered in black and silver damask. A full Chesterfield suite graces the studio, which also contains a grand piano and gramophone. Standard lamps, with rose-pink shade, and a few graceful silver vases, complete the equipment of the studio. A large plate-glass window, in three sections, and moveable, separates the control room from the studio. Full vision of the studio is thus given the operator, and the moveable sections permit of direct instruction being given. A complete glass window is also placed between the ladies' lounge and the studio, so that the waiting artists can see the progress of the programme.

LADIES' LOUNGE.

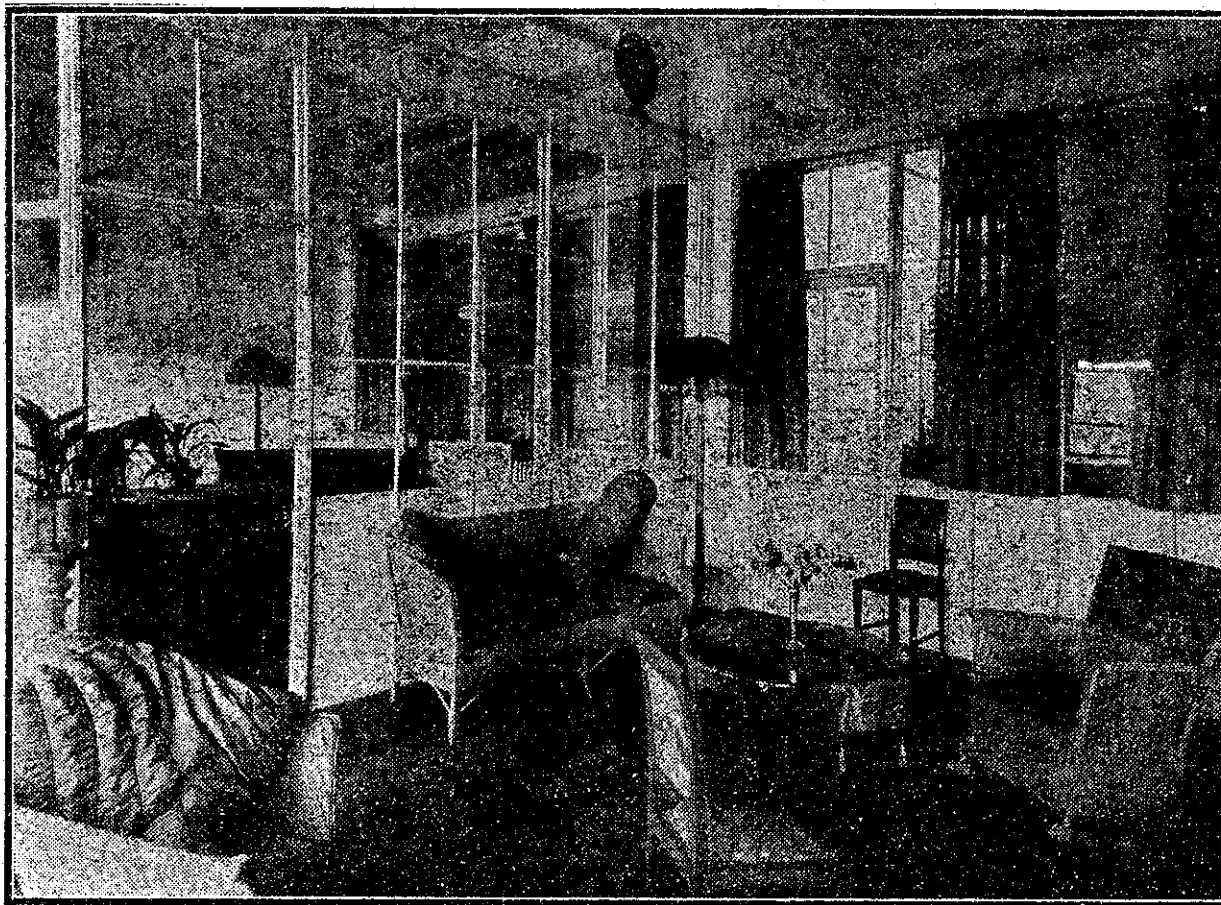
The ladies' lounge is a beautifully decorated and cosy room of 18 feet x 15 feet. It is upholstered in blue and grey, the same colour scheme being carried out in the carpet, while the furniture is in grey reed-loom, with attractive covering of blue and grey silk shadow tissue. Cushions in silken texture of blue and grey, with curtains of fawn repp, complete the restful effect of charm and comfort, while a few pieces of Dutch pottery in dull blue add a decorative note of colour. The French polished tables and chairs, in the prevailing tone of grey, are quite in the picture; and great plate-glass windows give a view of both studio and main smoking lounge. This latter is slightly larger than the ladies' room, being 18 feet x 19 feet.

All the rooms are separated by steel partitions, painted white, topped with plate-glass, giving a wide range of vision throughout the suite of rooms. The smoking-room is in Jacobean style, with multi-coloured carpet. The Jacobean furniture includes a monk's table and fawn velvet chenille suite, with cushions of blue and fawn velvet, a delightful ensemble being completed by a Jacobean standard lamp shaded in rose, and fawn repp curtains. The walls are decorated with a Royal deer, and some coloured pictures of New Zealand scenery.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

(By J. M. Bingham, Assoc. M.I.R.E.)

Although 3YA, Christchurch, was not the first of the Broadcasting Company's stations to be erected, it seems a fit and proper thing that, as Christchurch is the home of the head office of the B.B.C., that a description of 3YA should follow that of the big station 2YA. Before proceeding further it may be as well to explain what all this "YA" business is about. Many listeners-in, particularly the newly fledged ones, are unfamiliar with the Government regulations, which came into being some years back. These



LADIES' LOUNGE, CHRISTCHURCH STUDIO.

transmitting room on the floor above. In front of the announcer is a switch-board which enables him to control the microphones in the studio and to connect up with any of the telephone lines to theatres, churches, football grounds, and elsewhere for relay purposes. From this room the news of the day, market reports and other items are given out.

COMFORT OF ARTISTS.

The comfort of artists has been given special attention. Adjacent to the

THE MECHANISM.

On the fourth floor is the Western Electric 500-watt transmitter, the heart of the broadcasting mechanism. It delivers 500 watts of radio frequency energy to the antenna system. The plant consists of what is known as the speech input apparatus, which includes microphones and amplifiers, etc., the transmitter, a motor generator, and the power panel. Four 250-watt valves are employed, two being used as modulators and two as oscillators. A 50-watt valve serves as a speech amplifier.

The microphones are so constructed that they will operate satisfactorily at a distance of several feet from the source of sound. They transmit faithfully every gradation in tone of speech and music. These "mikes" are so suspended by springs that mechanical vibration which would otherwise affect the clarity of the sounds transmitted, is reduced to a minimum.

The aerial is at a height of 150 feet. It is of the flat top, inverted L type, with four wires, having a multi-wire counterpoise beneath. One tower stands on the roof of the four-story ferro-concrete offices of Messrs. A. R. Harris and Company, and the other tower has firm foundations in the earth.

COMPARED WITH THE B.B.C.

One of the most recent visitors to the studio of 3YA was a lady who had been on the staff of the B.B.C. for three years. Save that the London station was larger—there being some nine studios—the appointments were not as good as she saw at 3YA. She saw at 3YA, too, for the first time in a broadcasting station, the large plate-glass windows in the dividing walls of the various rooms. She heartily approved of the innovation. In fact, she approved of everything that she saw at 3YA, for everything exceeded her expectations. Incidentally, she condemned the present Government control of broadcasting in Britain, contending

sion and comfort of the performing artists. As compared with 2YA, it has the advantage of contiguity between the studio and the transmission, the lines being on top of the building specially built as the home of Christchurch broadcasting.

THE STUDIO.

The studio is a handsome room of approximately 40 feet in length by 30 feet in width. It is draped with

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