

THE NEW ZEALAND Radio Record

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P.O. Box 1032.
WELLINGTON.

WELLINGTON, JULY 29, 1927.

COPYRIGHT MATTERS

One aspect of broadcasting which has occupied a considerable amount of attention on the part of the authorities since its inception in New Zealand is that of copyright and, associated with it, royalties. The difficulty in dealing with the copyright issue has not been apparent to the general body of listeners, but it has unquestionably added to the difficulties of the company and the authorities in placing radio broadcasting in the Dominion upon as satisfactory a basis as possible. The general body of listeners will, we think, peruse with interest the very comprehensive and masterly treatment given to the subject of copyright in a special article elsewhere in this issue. This sets out the legal aspect of the matter. The copyright law, rightly enough, seeks to protect the author of a musical or artistic work in respect of his rights and earnings, but in so far as broadcasting is concerned it would seem to have carried that desire for protection to a point which may impose a certain amount of disability upon the general public. All authors of musical and artistic work have copyright of those works whether registration is made thereof or not. That copyright obtains during the life of the author and for a period of 50 years thereafter, and if reproduction of the work is desired by anyone, it is entirely within the right of the author or the holder of the copyright to cede the right of reproduction or refuse it. The fee chargeable for the right of reproduction is entirely within the discretion of the author or his nominee—there is no outside authority which can arbitrate or have any influence whatever upon the size of the fee demanded.

The development which has accentuated the difficulty in Australia and New Zealand has been the formation of an association designed to protect the rights of authors. To those general objects in themselves no objection can be taken, but as the article ably points out, there is a feature in the legislation which calls for consideration in relation to protection of the general public. At the time the British legislation from which the present position has arisen was passed, broadcasting was in its infancy, and no one foresaw the extent to which it would grow. The manufacturers of instruments for the mechanical reproduction of music, however—pianos and gramophones—were fully alive to the danger presented to themselves by the owners of copyright being at liberty in respect of works of national importance to arbitrarily impose any fee whatsoever, and so limit their capacity to reproduce these works in the public interest. They were therefore able to have provision made that, where agreement as to the amount could not be reached, a statutory minimum copyright fee should be paid.

Some such legislation is required in relation to broadcasting. As things stand, the Copyright Association has it entirely within its discretion to impose any fee whatsoever, individual or comprehensive, in respect of works desired to be broadcast. Arising out of that position, the New Zealand broadcasters have been compelled to meet the requirements of the Copyright Association. Listeners will appreciate the factors of the position as it stands as affecting their interests, and will, we think, also appreciate from this explanation the degree of investigational work and negotiation which has been undertaken by the Broadcasting Company in the protection of listeners.

The opening of 2YA has aroused considerable interest right throughout the country. The indications definitely are that a new wave of interest in radio broadcasting is arising. This will steadily grow in volume as the organisation in respect of the service side is matured. Comprehensive arrangements are in hand for the steady development of an era of better and fuller programmes. Afternoon sessions, calculated to appeal particularly to the women in the home, are well under way, and will be put on the air in the very near future. These will embrace subjects of particular interest to women in the home, and will serve to place them in full touch with the world in all those features that specially appeal.

We are pleased to be able to say that our initial number has evoked widespread favourable comment. This favourable reception is being accompanied by a steady inflow of subscriptions, for which we desire to extend our thanks. The policy of service upon which we have embarked can only be carried to its fullest point by our journal being placed in the greatest possible number of listeners' homes. The subscription has been based upon the lowest possible level—in fact, below the paying point until the circulation grows to a high figure. As indicated in our first number, it is the desire that the journal shall serve all interests connected with radio broadcasting—be the avenue, not only for the programmes of the Broadcasting Company, but for the point of view of listeners themselves, the record of their receptions, suggestions, and even complaints, and also as the medium for contact between the public and the traders who desire to serve the general body of listeners with efficient and modern equipment.

CONGRATULATIONS!

EXPECTATIONS EXCEEDED

GOOD-WILL FOR FUTURE.

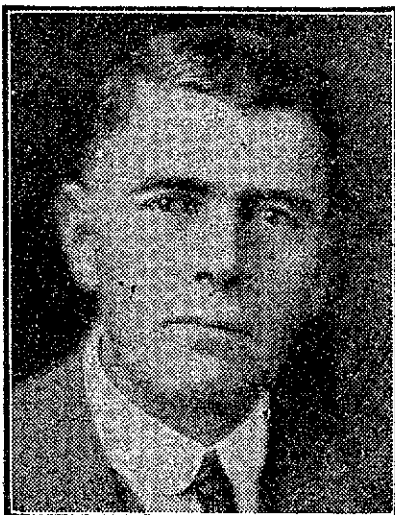
Mr. A. Markham, who was Secretary to the Post and Telegraph Department when the Radio Broadcasting Company of New Zealand, Ltd., was formed, and who retired from that office in November, 1926, sends the following message of congratulation and good-will:—

"Following on the opening of the Wellington Broadcasting Station with an output of five kilowatts supplied by the Western Electric Company, and to be known as 2YA, I would like to take the opportunity of congratulating the New Zealand Radio Broadcasting Company on showing enterprise in erecting and opening a station of such magnitude.

"It will, I feel sure, prove of great service to everyone interested in wireless. During the earlier stages of wireless broadcasting in New Zealand many difficulties had to be overcome.

"I feel sure that considering the geographical situation of the Dominion and its comparatively small population, every reasonable effort has been made to build up an organisation which before very long should satisfy the very large majority of enthusiasts.

"The number of licenses of all classes issued during the present year is, I



—S. P. Andrew, photo.

understand, in the vicinity of 21,000. I must admit that this number far exceeds the estimate I ventured to make during the year 1925 when occupying the position of Secretary to the Post and Telegraph Department. This underestimates on my part probably goes to prove that the service the New Zealand Broadcasting Company has since rendered to listeners has been the means of creating a source of education, information, and amusement, with the consequent increase in the number of licensed listeners and dealers.

"It only remains for the company to see that the best talent is secured, while at the same time listeners should realise that the selection in New Zealand is somewhat restricted when compared with other countries of considerable population. If the company, the Government, and the listeners will view the situation from each other's point of view and realise the difficulties to be met on all sides, I feel confident that broadcasting will be carried on with satisfaction to all concerned."

Random Philosophy

Dead yesterday and unborn to-morrow,
Why fret about them if to-day be sweet?

—Omar Khayyam.

Do to-day's duty, fight to-day's temptation, and do not weaken or distract yourself by looking forward to things which you cannot see, and could not understand if you saw them.

—Charles Kingsley.

To-morrow is that lamp upon the marsh, which a traveller never reached.

—Martin Tupper.

To-day is yours. To-morrow —

—Anon.

To-day is thine to spend, but not to-morrow;
Counting on morrow breedeth bankrupt sorrow;

O squander not this breath that Heaven hath lent thee;
Make not too sure another breath to borrow.

—Omar Khayyam.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow;
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,

To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.

—William Shakespeare.

The last day is hidden, that every day may be regarded.

—St. Augustine.

ON THE WATCH TOWER

--- Social, Political, and
Economic Notes.

By Observer

A SURVEY OF THE NATIONAL BALANCE

At the present time New Zealand, economically and perhaps politically and socially as well, is at the parting of the ways, and at one of the turning points of her development. The situation is very interesting, and illustrates to how great an extent, at the present time, our prosperity is moulded by outside influences, notably the world price level. This is because of our extreme dependence upon foreign markets for our exports, which are vital to our economic existence along present lines, since it is by them that we pay the cost of our large and varied imports, and the interest on our huge and growing national debt. New Zealand is like a man with an undeveloped outlying farm. He is borrowing lavishly to improve it, some of his improvements not being very necessary, wise, or likely to be fully productive in the future, while he is also enjoying all the luxuries the world can afford. These commitments he meets by sending abroad the produce of his farm, balancing the deficit by adding it to his debt. Incidentally he is a rather shiftless and inefficient person.

OUR WANTS HIGHLY DEVELOPED

Rightly or wrongly New Zealand desires roads and bridges, railways and smooth boulevards, ferries and harbours, hydro-electric power, telephones and telegraphs, and many other conveniences, some of which are so necessary that it is admittedly justifiable to mortgage the future to some extent to secure them, others being plainly extravagant in our existing stage of development. These things we cannot afford to pay for out of our own savings; indeed, we are a very spendthrift rather than a saving people; but we do pay for them out of the savings of other people, mainly our British kindred, by borrowing part of their accumulated capital on public account. There is no favour in this. They would not lend to us unless it suited them economically to do so, but there is a general opinion here, that we borrow too much for public purposes.

In addition, New Zealand wants motor-cars and their expensive accessories, movies and gramophones, champagne and fur coats, whisky and tobacco, and she wants a lot of them. To satisfy these wants we import from abroad, and we send in payment the products of our land, which constitute almost the whole of our exports. It is obvious, therefore, that our prosperity must depend directly on the comparative price levels of our exports and imports, in conjunction with the rate of interest on our borrowings. If export prices rise relatively to import prices, that is, if the prices of primary produce rise relatively to the prices of manufactured commodities, or fall less than those of manufactured commodities, it is to our advantage, and vice versa, since we should be getting the same volume of imports for a less volume of exports, and vice versa. Unfortunately in recent years the tendency has been for manufactured prices to be firmer than primary produce prices. Similarly, if primary produce is high in price, then we have so much the less volume of our exports to part with in payment of interest, and vice versa.

Our prosperity is thus directly dependant on the market for our exportable produce. As it unfortunately happens, such prices have tended to fall relatively to other prices, and the rate of interest has tended to rise. This accounts in great measure for the present straitened condition of the Dominion.

EFFECT OF OUTSIDE FACTORS.

It is important for our people to understand that the causes of our prosperity lie mainly overseas, and are to a considerable extent beyond our control. We cannot modify these factors, and we therefore have to adjust ourselves to world price movements and shape our requirements accordingly. If we carry over the habits permissible in a period of prosperity into leaner times, then we can look for trouble with the certainty of finding it. Trouble, in fact, is about the only thing you

are perfectly sure to find if you look for it, and often you cannot avoid it even if you carefully refrain from seeking it out. None of our younger generation can now remember hard times in New Zealand, since the last generation has lived through a period of steady and assured prosperity, so that it is perhaps not unnatural that many people should imagine that prosperity to be eternal. Things, however, have not always been so. From the early seventies until the middle nineties of last century there was a general downward trend of world prices, accompanied in New Zealand by considerable hardship, but from the end of that period up to a year or two ago prices trended steadily upward. These lengthy price swings take about a generation to work out, and then the pendulum swings back. The reason for the movement has never been satisfactorily explained, but it is clearly marked for the period, about a hundred years or so, of which we have reliable records.

All the indications, however, now point to a period of falling prices; not a catastrophic drop, but an average moving slowly downwards. This will, it is true, mean lower prices for our imports, but it will also mean lower prices for exports as well; and that, in conjunction with the increase both in average interest rates and the volume of our public debt, means that we shall have to curtail our expenditure and improve our income unless the standards of living are to be rather seriously affected. The standards of living of some of our people, notably the farmers, have already been forced to some measure of adjustment: it is only a matter of time, if things go on in their present trend, before others will have to adjust themselves as well. This will not do much real harm, since much of the expenditure of our people is for pleasures of a poor ethical content that could be dispensed with without much real curtailment of satisfaction or efficiency.

We must face the fact that export prices, the sources of our income, in the main, are dropping, that money is harder to borrow, and that unemployment, though not great in volume, is persistent to an extent not known in New Zealand for over a generation. These are signs of the times.

WHY IS WORKING CAPITAL SHORT.

As it happens we have been for many years living, economically speaking, and perhaps in other respects as well, in a fool's paradise. Such a paradise is a pleasant place of abode, as long as it is habitable, but the roof is now leaking badly. We have made singularly little provision for the future; we have been a spending rather than a saving people. Of course many people have saved, and saved considerable capital, but when one considers the resources in the way of borrowed money and goodly revenue for exports that we have enjoyed for so many years, it must be admitted that there has been overmuch consumption, and that much of that consumption can now fairly be regarded as wasted. We seem to be bare of working capital, and much of the capital that we have borrowed from abroad has not been expended wisely or productively, but rather has been frittered away in duplicated works, in works that do not pay their way and therefore have to be subsidised, either out of taxes or fresh borrowings, in works that are an extravagance at our present stage of development, and in works that are competing with one another and thus lowering the aggregate productivity of the investment.

The borrowing policy up to a point, has been sound; we were justified in anticipating the future to some extent, but the ease of borrowing has tempted us, and other overseas Dominions, into much wasteful expenditure that is now a source of economic embarrassment. It has tempted us to think in big figures, and we have slowly been led along until we have a load of debt that is a considerable burden. Not all or indeed most of this is dead weight debt, but much capital borrowed on public account for developmental pur-