

THE NEW ZEALAND Radio Record

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P.O. Box 1032,
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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1927.

The event of the week has been the broadcast of the Dempsey-Tunney fight from Chicago. Short-wave enthusiasts throughout New Zealand were keenly alive to this historic event, and made exhaustive preparations for linking up with some of the broadcasts arranged for by American organisations. The most outstanding success in reception, so far as published accounts go, seems to have been secured by the well-known Gisborne amateur, Mr. Ivan H. O'Meara, whose capacity was recently outlined in our columns. Mr. O'Meara was able to establish reception with the broadcast prior to the commencement of the fight, and secured apparently a verbatim record of the ringside announcer's description. Congratulations must be accorded Mr. O'Meara for his skill. He is fortunate, too, in being in a good reception area. The well-known Wellington amateur, Mr. F. W. Sellens, was also successful in receiving part of the account from 2XAF Schenectady.

An event of this outstanding character inevitably has a marked effect in spreading interest in radio. Many amateurs, stirred by the attention recently devoted to short-wave Empire broadcasts, have installed equipment, or are in the process of installing it, with a view to taking advantage of such events and establishing close contact with the outside world. Admittedly radio has yet to make further advances in the short-wave field to perfect the service, but the technical skill of the world is steadily concentrating upon these problems.

The Radio Broadcasting Company was fully alive to the importance of the occasion, and the interest that was being taken in the result of the contest. Arrangements were made at each of the four centres for efforts to be made at reception, and as a result periodic announcements were broadcast from the various stations during the afternoon, and a concise summary prepared for announcement during the evening, at the news sessions, and also at the commencement of the regular session. The company's experts were able, both at Auckland and Wellington, to secure partial results, although much interfered with by the howling valve nuisance. The fact that it was not possible to pick up and re-broadcast the announcement word for word shows that many technical difficulties have yet to be overcome, and explains how overseas programmes cannot yet be incorporated as part of the regular broadcast programme. It is certain, however, that the next few years will show marvellous strides in placing listeners in immediate contact with events in the outside world.

CHILDREN'S SESSIONS.

In another column we feature the statement of the general manager of the Radio Broadcasting Company, in connection with the organisation of children's sessions at all four centres. To accomplish this Mrs. Anna Rose Hall, wife of Captain J. S. H. Hall, has been appointed principal of the children's department of the Radio Broadcasting Company of New Zealand, Ltd., to organise and co-ordinate the work of the sessions at all four centres. This is a very responsible position, and listeners in general will hope that Mrs. Hall will bring to the task the necessary training and capacity, and will achieve the success that the importance of the work warrants. She will have the good-will of all listeners to that end. Children are the enthusiasts of the world, and against their enthusiasm no parents can long hold sway. It is of fundamental importance, therefore, that the greatest possible use should be made of the youthful enthusiasm and appreciation that they are capable of putting into an extension of radio service. Everyone will appreciate the altruistic and idealistic lines upon which the general manager forecasts that the children's sessions are to be conducted by Mrs. Hall. These ideals are fine. It is desired to make the sessions not only entertaining, but educative. The suggestion may be pardoned, however, that perhaps a little too much stress is being laid upon the educational nature of the proposed children's sessions. Children don't want to be told that they are being educated. The greatest success will be won by, in popular language, it being "put over" without their knowing it. Interest is the fundamental of education, and if the interest of the children, and adults, too, is secured, education will follow of itself in the merit of the items being broadcast. The execution of the plans for the children's session will perhaps not be so markedly educational as this preliminary statement suggests.

It is interesting to note that the Education Department proposes tests in the near future for the suitability of radio for certain school purposes. Up-to-date countries have already applied radio to child instruction. In a review elsewhere we are told of the Chicago school children being equipped with 30,000 loudspeakers. All public schools in Italy are fitted. There is, we believe, definite scope for the profitable use of radio in New Zealand education, and once the rural communities are seized of the value of broadcasting, they will find a way of overcoming the cost factor, which is now concerning the Department of Education.



—Standish and Preece, photo.

MR. ALBERT BIDGOOD.

Conductor, pianist and orchestral arranger, Mr. Bidgood now has charge of the orchestra at Everybody's Theatre, which is often on the air from 3YA. Mr. Bidgood's musical career, which commenced with his appearance at the Mansion House, London, when he was nine years of age, includes engagements in England and in New Zealand. He wielded the baton for military bands in Plaistow, Poplar, Herefordshire, Beckton, West Ham and other places. He was pianist for many orchestras, and played the violin and French horn in many a band and orchestra. In Christchurch he is very well known. For thirteen years he was piano conductor at Fullers' Opera House, and for two years conductor of the Christchurch Professional Musicians' Orchestra. At Everybody's he has succeeded Mr. W. J. Bellingham, who is now Director of Music for the Broadcasting Co.

A RADIO TREAT

REV. J. ROBERTSON FROM 3YA.

The Rev. J. Robertson, who came from Australia 18 months ago to take charge of the Oxford Street Baptist Church, Christchurch, is to speak from 3YA on Friday on "The Romance of the Discovery of Australia." The subject is a most interesting one, but even if it were not Mr. Robertson would make the telling interesting. He has a particularly good radio presence, and has faced the microphone in Australia and in New Zealand. A widely-travelled gentleman—to a great extent exploring off the beaten track in Australia—and having made a study of the subject on which he has chosen to talk for



—Photo, Clifford.

radio, Mr. Robertson is well equipped to provide an educational treat for listeners. He took his theological course at the Queensland Baptist College, and graduated in history, philosophy, and languages at Melbourne University. Incidentally it may be mentioned that he was an inter-State footballer and keen tennis player. He saw service in the Great War as a chaplain with the Australian troops, and when, after ten years' service, he resigned prior to coming to New Zealand, he was the senior chaplain of his military district. When in Victoria Mr. Robertson had charge of one of the leading churches. As a churchman, he favours the broadcasting of services, his experience in Australia having convinced him that radio is an ally whose help in the broadcasting of the Gospel should be sought and encouraged. Mr. Robertson's lecture on Friday will be the first of a series.

TOO SMART!

The telephone was ringing almost continuously in the broadcasting station, and every inquiry seemed to be as to who won the boxing match. At last the clerk grew tired and decided in future to reply before the usual question was asked. Next time he answered the telephone ring he said "Tunney won." To his surprise a feminine voice said: "Thank you, but I did not want to know that. I really wanted to know where I could get the 'Radio Record.'"

It is estimated that between 12,000,000 and 15,000,000 radio sets are in operation throughout the world. Of these the United States is believed to have nearly half, or more than 5,500,000 sets.

CHILDREN'S SESSIONS

METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT

The announcement that the Broadcasting Company intends to develop its Children's Sessions has been received with great approval. A survey of the lines which it is intended to follow has now been given by the General Manager, Mr. A. R. Harris.

In the course of a statement on the subject, Mr. Harris said:—"It is the aim of the Broadcasting Company so to arrange the programmes for the children's hour that they will prove instructive as well as entertaining, at the same time avoiding the heavy, dry pedantic form of tuition.

"In an educational sense broadcasting becomes a veritable channel for knowledge, and it is necessary that the company's officers should so use it for the benefit of young listeners. The best of everything will be provided, making what is broadcast interesting, and possible of assimilation by the children.

"I cannot do better than quote an extract from the report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education:

'All education is development and discipline of faculty by the communication of knowledge; and whether the faculty be the eye and hand, or the reason and imagination,' (to which broadcasting appeals to a great extent), 'and whether the knowledge be of nature or art, of science or literature, if the knowledge be so communicated as to evoke and exercise and discipline faculty, the process is rightly termed education.'

"The Radio Broadcasting Company, however, intends to go further than this, or rather to enlarge upon this, and to so use the power it has in the medium of broadcasting as to act in the nature of a stimulant to the juvenile mind in the development of character; by creating a greater sense of the fitness of things; by impressing upon the children the importance of a readiness to obey cheerfully and willingly the calls made upon them by duty; by inculcating in the child's mind thoughtfulness and respect for others, and the beauty of honour and truthfulness in word and act; and, further, to create a keener appreciation for the good, the beautiful, and finer things in life.

"Bearing in mind the plasticity of the childish brain our intention is so to present our programmes during the children's session as to be readily absorbed by them, and the children's organisers in line with this policy will take care that no item will be broadcast that may prove a possible danger or detriment to the child's future welfare.

"Of course, this is no easy matter. Juvenile education always demands a good deal of care and attention. To accomplish the aims and ideals set forth it means the closest co-operation of all those concerned. It means a clear insight into the different standards of education desired by the various classes of people, it means a final merging of these standards into the one we have outlined. I fully believe that parents want the best procurable for their children.

"Our intention is to so arrange the programmes that all ages are catered for. Not only will this be done in the actual items submitted for broadcast to our juvenile audience (whose ages vary from two to sixteen years of age), as well as to a large number of adults, who find the children's session vastly entertaining, but consideration will also be shown in the times selected for transmission. Children from two to six years will have the first fifteen to twenty minutes, from six to ten the next, and so on. We shall commence at five for the tiny tots, keeping to the usual six o'clock hour for the advanced session, except in the winter time, when we shall carry right through from five to six-thirty o'clock of an evening. In this way the 'tiny folk' will be sent off to bed in good time by the wise parent who realises that 'early to bed' is the best means of ensuring their continued good health.

"Consistent with the outlined policy we shall not only study the child's welfare mentally, but in a physical sense as well. In this connection, Mr. Macdonald, secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in Christchurch, promises us every assistance possible. I am sure the same help will be forthcoming for the other stations.

"A vast field in the way of entertainment for children is to be opened up, and in doing so it is desirable that the items broadcast should be rendered, as much as possible, by the juveniles themselves under the aegis of "Uncles," "Aunts," "Big Brothers," and "Big Sisters." Juvenile orchestras, bands, and choirs will be formed; orchestras and bands to be string and instrumental—choirs to be either of boys' or girls' voices, or of both. Child performers will be graded and indexed in the same manner as are adult performers.

"Stories and lectures will play an important part in the entertainments. Stories, of which there is a very wide selection, will not be of a gloomy or hair-raising type. Lectures offer as wide and varied a choice as do stories, and much useful instruction can be given here.

"Under the heading of lectures there can be talks on:—

"Health.—Personal attention, first aid, physical culture.

"Geography.—With entertaining accounts of the various countries and their people.

"Music.—Including sketches of the lives of our great musicians, interspersed with short familiar renderings of their compositions.

"Literature.—Covering authors and their books, and including probably chats on painting and drawing.

"History.—A wonderful and inexhaustible field of entertainment and instruction. These lectures could deal with the characters, aims, and ideals of famous personages, and the progress of the nations could be traced by the reading of their deeds. These stories would inculcate in the minds of the young listeners the love of all that is noble and honourable, as we see it in the lives of the nations' heroes on the battlefields, in naval battles, and in battles waged by word and pen in Parliaments and churches, as well as in the scientific world."

RADIO IN SCHOOLS

RECOMMENDED IN ENGLAND.

Lately, in England, a committee of schoolmasters has been investigating under the auspices of the National Association of Schoolmasters (Great Britain) the question of wireless in its relation to teaching. They recommend, after taking evidence and making a thorough investigation, as follows:—

1. (a) Schools should be provided with approved receiving sets with loudspeakers, which should constitute part of the school equipment.

(b) An engineer should be employed by the local education authority for the maintenance of school receiving sets.

(2) There should be a body set up under the joint auspices of the British Broadcasting Corporation and the local education authorities of each broadcasting area for the purpose of advising in the selection of personnel and matter, and to interpret and transmit to the effective staff current ideals in education.

3. Broadcasting, in its employment as a method in primary education, should be confined to the following subjects:—Music and singing, recitation, moral and religious instruction, drama, history, geography, and science.

SHARPER TUNING

BY BROADCAST STATIONS.

Mr. R. G. Beard, the well-known Sydney radio engineer, in the course of a newspaper controversy, writes: "It would give me great pleasure to explain how broadcast station sidebands can be reduced, and how it has been done at Rugby and 2GB, Sydney, and why it cannot be done continuously at Australian broadcasting stations until the present regulations are altered, due to the loss of power entailed and not permitted to be used. Also, I may be able to explain, with the aid of quotations from various alleged experts in other parts of the world, why the unmodulated carrier wave of a broadcasting station may possess a large decrement, and so render its tuning broad. (At a later time, this could be demonstrated at one of the Sydney broadcasting stations.) If any time is then available, I will then show how the magnitude of the sidebands is absolutely independent of the depths of modulation, and only depends on the modulating frequency."

A number of listeners comment upon the faint whistle entangled in the wave of 3LO, Melbourne. It is one of the Japanese stations clashing with the Australian.