

THE NEW ZEALAND  
Radio Record

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

Printed Tuesdays to permit of effective distribution before the week-end, with full copyrighted programmes for the succeeding week. Nominal date of publication Friday.

LITERARY MATTER.

All literary matter and contributions must be addressed to the Editor. If the return of M.S. is desired, enclose 1d. stamp.

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Rate of Subscription: Single copies, 3d.; Annual Subscription (if booked), £2/6, post free; normal rate, cash in advance, 10/-, post free.

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P.O. Box 1032,  
WELLINGTON.

WELLINGTON, DECEMBER, 30, 1927.

RETROSPECT OF THE YEAR'S BROADCASTING.

The year has been of the most outstanding and momentous character in relation to broadcasting. Remarkable progress has been made, and the future looms even brighter than ever.

The growth throughout the year has been so steady and sustained that, except for a deliberate casting back of the mind to the conditions of twelve months ago, it is difficult to picture in full review the real developments of the year. When the bells welcomed in 1927, 1YA was the only new and up-to-date station operating in New Zealand, and that station was itself of only four months' standing. In the New Year, however, 3YA was completed, and the end of January saw it on the way to attain a standard of transmission and excellence of programme that has made it a popular favourite.

After January, a few short months saw the fullest energy concentrated upon the construction of 2YA, and in July that station, the giant of the South, was opened with the pomp and eclat justified by the occasion.

From a constructional point of view, the achievement of the Broadcasting Company in building and opening these three up-to-date stations, and putting them on the air in less than twelve months, was an outstanding one.

END OF THE CONSTRUCTIONAL ERA.

The official opening of 2YA at the end of July may be said to have marked the climax of the constructional era of the company. It liberated the directing energy of the company from the construction of buildings and the installation of plant to the development of programmes and the

provision of the necessary administrative staffs. The reorganisation and elaboration of the programmes has since that time steadily proceeded, with the result that, musically, broadcasting in New Zealand now stands in an unchallenged position. Under the policy of the company of securing the best professional talent, there are now ranged round the microphones at the principal stations the very best artists available in the respective cities. These artists appear regularly, and thus derive the advantage of experience before the microphone and a steadily widening repertoire to meet the demand for variety.

DEVELOPMENT OF ADEQUATE PROGRAMMES.

The reorganisation of programmes on the basis indicated has just recently commenced, but has come opportunely to usher out the Old Year in a standard of attainment which augurs well for the dawn of the New Year. The significance of the encouragement of these high-class artists will not be lost on the music-loving public. Their encouragement demonstrates the sincerity of the policy laid down by the general manager, Mr. A. R. Harris, that the company intended to secure the best artists available. In this field it is to be noted that the Broadcasting Company is now the outstanding concert organiser of the Dominion, and offers a market for talent, musical and elocutionary, not hitherto available, that is bound to have its effect in the encouragement of the arts. Nightly now not less than 100,000 people enjoy the musical fare provided.

CHILDREN'S SESSIONS LEAD THE WORLD.

A feature of the programme reorganisation that has lately been undertaken is the diversity given to the children's sessions. In this field it is confidently believed that New Zealand leads the world. In no other country has the policy been developed so successfully of inducing the children to provide their own fare. With the joyous abandon of youthful enthusiasm, the children, wherever appealed to, have revelled in the opportunity of appearing before the microphone, and at each station the children's sessions have become a feature that indicates they are growing to be a centre of interest and charm.

SPORTS AND SERVICE RELAYS.

Outstanding developments have also taken place in the sports service provided by the company. Arrangements have consistently been made for procuring and broadcasting results of all important field events and, wherever possible, of describing those events while they are in progress. Football, racing, boxing, athletics and cycling have all been described. In this section some particularly long distance relay work has been done, notably in connection with the two Ranfurly Shield matches (one from Masterton and the other from Palmerston North). Another successful relay was that of the Maori concert, from Otaki to Wellington.

HISTORY MADE BY RE-BROADCASTING ENGLAND.

In addition to distant relays, popular attention has at times been concentrated upon successful re-broadcasts by New Zealand stations of one another or of overseas stations. The most outstanding event was unquestionably the successful re-broadcasting of 5SW, England, on the occasion of the Armistice Day celebrations. This was achieved by 3YA, and enabled crystal set users in Christchurch to have the unique experience of hearing speech and music delivered in England—a distance exactly half-way round the world. This is the limit of long-distance reception on this earth, and marks a distinctly creditable performance for the year's broadcasting in New Zealand.

CHAIN SYSTEM THE WORLD'S BEST.

In this general review of the situation of broadcasting in New Zealand, it is interesting to note that the system that has been adopted in New Zealand for the erection of a chain of stations, under one central control, and so placed as to cover the whole country, is the system which has been recommended for adoption by the Australian Royal Commission, and has been adopted in England by the British Broadcasting Corporation. It is also under discussion for adoption in America.

The important point to notice in this connection, however, is that New Zealand has been fortunately managed and regulated, in that it had no established conditions to clear away, but was able to start on a comparatively virgin field with a system that is recognised to be the ideal for efficient public service. Other countries are faced with the problem of clearing the ground before they can secure their desired end.

THE POLICY OF THE COMPANY AND ITS OUTCOME.

It is not out of place to mention finally in this general review that the Radio Broadcasting company throughout has avoided making specific promises as to the service to be given but, after laying down a general policy of the quality of service aimed at, has gone steadily ahead, giving the best service possible, commensurate with sound judgment and the income available.

That the efforts made to meet the public taste have been satisfactory is indicated most conclusively by the fact that each improvement in service has called forth an increasing tide of response from the public.

There has been no vacillation of policy, but each move has represented a steady driving forward to a higher level of efficiency, and in turn has met with an appreciative response from the public.

WHAT OF RADIO IN THE FUTURE?

What of the future? This brief review of the past, and the gleams it gives of the rapid progress of recent months, cannot but inspire hope and confidence. In a year the number of license-holders has risen from 14,541 to a figure only very slightly under 40,000. This growth has not been built on promises; it has been built on performance. The quality of the programmes which have been broadcast have attracted the public sufficiently to encourage their investment in radio. That has meant a very big turnover in business for the radio trade generally. Inasmuch as the 40,000 mark, good as it is, represents only approximately 15 per cent. of the homes of the Dominion, it is plain that 1928 should continue to be a good radio year. With a continuance of the same energy, initiative, and a capacity for service that have been displayed in the past twelve months, the succeeding year should witness steady and progressive growth and material enlargement of the radio circle.

SPORTING BROADCASTS

NEXT WEEK'S FEATURES.

The following is a list of the sports fixtures to be broadcast for the week ending January 7:—

1YA, January 2 and 3, Auckland Racing Club's meeting at Ellerslie.  
3YA, January 2 and 3, Canterbury Park Trotting Club's meeting, at Addington.

EMPIRE BROADCASTS

BRITAIN'S NEW STATION.

Arrangements for the opening of the powerful short-wave station in Great Britain for conducting Empire broadcasting services were made so quietly that very few people in Great Britain or this part of the world knew how far advanced the work was. Engineers of the British Broadcasting Corporation announced two months ago that a short-wave station for Empire broadcasting would be built in Great Britain in time to be in operation by Christmas. Apparently the work on the station has been advanced in a manner which was never expected, and for the first time an Empire programme was transmitted on Armistice Day. Even now very little is known about the station which the Broadcasting Corporation used for transmitting that programme.

20,000 WATTS POWER.

The power used is said to be about 20 kilowatts, and the wave-length about 24 metres. There has been very little opportunity for preliminary testing, and few in the Antipodes have heard the experimental transmissions from the station. Those who have heard it, however, say that its signals are even louder and clearer than the signals from PCJJ. It is desirable, however, that listeners should bear in mind that perfection must not be expected from the outset. Much ground has yet to be covered before the great problems associated with long-distance transmissions are overcome. There is no question that regular and practically perfect Empire transmissions will ultimately be possible, but some years are likely to elapse before that time comes.

LECTURETTES

FROM 2YA.

On Monday, January 9, Mr. Archibald Sando, manager of "The Dominion," will conclude his interesting series of lecturettes on "The Romance of the Press." On this occasion Mr. Sando will touch on some of the humorous aspects of newspaper work and life.

On January 2 Mr. Leonard A. Griffiths will talk to you about "Flower Legends from Greek History"; on the 3rd you will hear Mr. A. J. Dry tell of "The Early History of the Whaling Industry"; on the 5th Mr. Byron Brown will deliver another of his delightful lecturettes, with illustrative excerpts, on the works of Shakespeare; on the 16th Mr. Archibald Sando will deal with "The Romance of Radio"; on the 19th Mr. Stanley W. Fearn, A.R.I.B.A., will commence a series of lecturettes on "Architecture"; and on the 6th and 13th there will be the regular Friday evening talk on "Imperial Affairs."

GRAMOPHONE MUSIC

URGED IN AUSTRALIA.

The radio writer for the Melbourne "Argus" says: "Every listener will agree that some of the items now being produced by artists could very well be replaced by gramophone selections. Probably in Australia more than in Great Britain or the United States the broadcasting of a certain proportion of gramophone music is justified. Those who have criticised the programmes from the main stations have been forced to admit that it is sometimes difficult to obtain artists. Gramophone music of the better kind is now so good that it is strikingly like an original performance. This being so, the use of a gramophone makes it possible for the broadcasting companies to provide listeners with a kind of music which many of them would have no other opportunity of hearing. So long as the gramophone music broadcast is of first quality, and so long as too much of it is not provided in each programme, there can be no reasonable objection to it. It is when broadcasting companies begin to depend on gramophones for producing dance music and other programmes of the kind, which can be provided so much better by a studio orchestra, or to use the gramophone to avoid the engagement of satisfactory artists, that listeners are justified in complaining."

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