

Our Mail Bag

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"D.T." (Rotorna) reports that he has logged just a dozen Yankee broadcast stations since December 1 last. He remarks: "So summer does not altogether make DX work impossible." The present period is in the depths of winter in the Northern Hemisphere, which may favour reception from North America. Our correspondent complains about power-line interference, which, however, is a most difficult problem to combat for all parties concerned. The locating of the line leakages is none too easy. "D.T." mentions having recently received KFKB, Dr. Brinkley's Hospital broadcast station, Milford, Kansas, 241.8 metres, 1000 watts. Another station he has heard is KGER, Long Beach, California, 215.7 metres, which is listed as using only 100 watts power.

IYA Appreciated.

Captain Bayley (Silverdale): I would like to give greater publicity, through your columns, to the local appreciation of the efforts made by the Radio Broadcasting Company to entertain listeners during this festive season from IYA. The morning broadcast; the engagement of an instrumental trio (which we trust will be permanent); the high class of the artists to whom we have listened, and the untiring efforts of the station staff, from the director downwards, have all contributed to our pleasure.

An Auckland Appreciation.

J. Reading Carlsen (Auckland): It gives me great pleasure to again compliment the New Zealand Radio Broadcasting Company for the splendid programmes arranged for the benefit of listeners-in. The items are of exceptional merit, and do credit to all concerned. I am sure those people who are not yet in possession of a radio set of some kind, either valve or crystal, are missing some real enjoyment. Being the possessor of a crystal set, I, of course, am only able to get IYA, but the items from that station are received by me in excellent volume, even when, as is often the case, I have as many as four or five 'phones attached to the radio receiver. The Auckland station, IYA, notified us that they would attempt to rebroadcast the programme sent out by the station at Chelmsford, England, at 3.45 on Christmas morning, New Zealand time. It was very interesting and instructive to hear voices singing, bands playing, and, lastly, to hear Big Ben striking the hour in dear old England. We are now on the eve of the New Year, and wish the company and all of the artists who have given us so much enjoyment, a happy and prosperous New Year.

Programme Suggestions.

G. R. Jackson (Masterton), as a subscriber, I would like to congratulate you on the publication of the "New Zealand Radio Record." Besides publishing weekly programmes for the New Zealand stations, your paper contains many articles of interest, and is well worth reading by those who have no radio sets. I wish you every success for 1928.

Regarding the programmes, no doubt it is an extremely difficult matter to cater for all tastes, and, I assume, just as difficult to obtain the artists. It is, of course, apparent that some of those contributing to the programmes are anything but finished musicians, still this cannot very well be helped. I have discussed the matter of programmes with many Wairarapa radio set owners, and in practically every instance their opinion is the same—I might state that these opinions apply principally to 2YA, as Christchurch to a large extent and Auckland to a lesser extent do vary their programmes. My own opinion, and as before stated the opinion of many other set owners in this district, is that Wellington should have less vocal and more instrumental items, not forgetting such instruments as the steel guitar, etc. Band music is always acceptable—it is often felt too that during the course of an evening's programme, a little dance music now and again and light catchy tunes help one to digest the heavier music. At radio evenings young people like to have a whirl round the room to some catchy dance tune—this need not be a regular item—still now and again during the week it would be greatly appreciated. Why not go a little further and periodically—principally during the

winter months—have a dance evening—parties can then be arranged beforehand as the "Radio Record" would contain all information as to when this class of music would be broadcast.

Now, sir, a large percentage of set owners are business men, and if busy, have little time to spare for listening in. Could it possibly be arranged for the broadcasting of instrumental items including gramophone records (not vocal) during meal hours, say from 1 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. Not every day but say three times a week. The children would, no doubt, enjoy half an hour's music (6 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.), just as much as their parents. I am certain that a little music during meal hours would more than be appreciated by every set owner. It is quite an easy matter to bore a hole through a wall and place your loud speaker in another or the next room, or if necessary longer cords can be obtained for a few shillings.

Although I notice it has been mentioned several times in the "Radio Record," I would like to emphasise the fact that the Dunedin station is a complete wash-out. I do not know of any Wairarapa Listener-in who has obtained any decent result from this station. With a five-valve set you can only hear a faint whisper. Cannot the station be improved? It is useless as it now is and not worth its upkeep.

[Your suggestions are welcomed. Last winter several special dance programmes were put on from 2YA, and the same course will be followed this winter. The other suggestions will be considered. The Dunedin station has been much improved as will become apparent when summer time and its disadvantages depart.—Ed.]

Dunedin's Problem.

For 4YA (Dunedin) writes: In the past there have been many grumbles throughout New Zealand, but I think that the Dunedin (Otago) listeners have a genuine complaint. During Christmas week, 1, 2 and 3YA had daily sessions from 12 on without a stop—even on the silent days. Such effort on the part of the Broadcasting Company was creditable, but what about 4YA? Is the company deliberately trying to avoid and to let Dunedin slide? The complaint is insufficient licenses. The reply is that our money is going north to 2 and 3YA, the favoured stations. The dealers here had to demonstrate on distant stations, which in many cases proved fatal, as any radio-set owner who knows mid-city daylight distant reception is like will know; I mean interference generally. Thus I take it that 4YA to jog along because the Dunedin service is too limited. Under an ordinary week 3YA broadcasts 27 hours, while 4YA 18 hours. I would like to ask one question, but I very much doubt if it will be answered: (1) Is Dunedin to receive a new station? (2) Is the old one to be done up? or (3) are things to go on as they are? The general manager seems to be disappointed to New Zealand listeners by his secretiveness. Cannot he make a statement, or is it not the method of the company?

In view of the fact that the total Otago and Southland licenses total 2400, our correspondent's suggestion that the money derived therefrom is being diverted from Dunedin to run the northern stations is, to say the least, somewhat humorous. A moment's thought will show that to be impossible. The Dunedin station and service has lately been very much improved, in line with a full statement made by the general manager some three months ago, and in view of that, while sympathising with our correspondent's desires, we think his letter is really a little ungrateful.—Ed.

Hugo Gernsback, editor of the "New York Radio News" says:—"Right now, the radio industry has its great chance. I refer to television. Inside of the next two years, broadcast stations will be sending out television impulses, and a number of radio manufacturers will literally coin money by supplying television attachments to be attached to existing radio receiving sets. What has the radio industry done toward developing this tremendous potential demand? Nothing. Yet the field is wide open and, even to-day, a workable television apparatus without wheels and moving parts can be secured on the open market."

A 10,000 watt broadcast station is nearing completion in Johannesburg, South Africa. An endeavour will be made to place broadcasting on a higher standard than in the past.

CHINESE LIKE RADIO

SAN FRANCISCO'S ORIENTALS.

Chinese women clad in trousers and men in the centuries' old costume of the Far East listen eagerly to radio programmes in their apartments in San Francisco's Chinatown. For the Chinese have added to the list of household necessities the radio.

There are more radio aeriels in one block along Grant Avenue, Chinatown's main street, than in any other block in San Francisco, according to Gon Sam Mue, of the United States Immigration Office.

Their residence restricted to Chinatown, the Chinese necessarily live in crowded fashion. Radio appeals to them not only as a means of bringing in the music and entertainment of the outside world, but also for its value in keeping the children off the streets, Gon declared.

Great Music Lovers.

The Chinese love music, and that is one of the reasons why radio means so much to them, according to the Princess Der Ling of China, who has participated in many radio programmes in her native China, and incidentally spoke over the General Electric station KGO the first day she arrived in the United States from the Orient. It brings them in contact with European and American music, greatly different from their own, she said, and also gives them a better knowledge of what is going on in the "outside" world.

"The American notion that Chinese music consists of a series of cat howls is due largely to the fact that Chinese are fond of the falsetto male voice," the Princess said in her talk over KGO.

"Male altos, however, at one time were used exclusively both in church and the opera. The West has let its

DEAF HEAR RADIO

BONES TRANSMIT SOUND.

The seat of hearing is in the brain, and connection between this and the middle ear—which in a radio system might represent the pick-up wires or aerial—is made by the nerve of hearing. In the normal person sound is transmitted to the nerve of hearing through air conduction via the eardrum. But in the deaf, where the passage to the drum membrane has been obstructed or the drum has for other reason been rendered useless, sound is transmitted through bone conduction via the skull bones.

Dr. Carlis H. Muncie, a noted American ear specialist, says that this latter is just what happens when deaf people who cannot hear ordinary spoken sounds can hear quite well through radio headphones. The caps, pressed tightly against the ear structure, transmit the sounds directly to the nerve of hearing through the bones of the head.

WIRE FOR COILS

In winding radio coils, the radio beginner often is puzzled as to how to proceed if he doesn't happen to have wire of exactly the specified size on hand with which to wind the tuning units. There is no magic in wire sizes within rather wide limits. If the specifications for a given coil call for No. 22 double silk covered wire and you haven't that size on hand, use the nearest size to it. Of course, if you use different wire you will have to



The Melodious Four, a brilliant quartet of singers engaged to appear regularly from 3YA. (From the left the singers are: Mr. Russell Sumner, Miss Frances Hamerton, Miss Belle Renaut, and Mr. T. D. Williams.) Webb Photo.

women take part in music and drama a little sooner than the East has done."

Chinese Play at KGO.

The Chinese have no desire to take all and give nothing in return. One of the most colourful dramas ever put on the air was recently presented over station KGO by the Chinese of San Francisco. It was a drama of the Yangtze River. No more enthusiastic group of people ever assembled in a broadcast studio than appeared at KGO for the presentation of this play.

Radio dramatists may learn much from the Chinese drama, according to the Princess, for it is in certain ways peculiarly adapted to radio needs. There is very little action and practically no stage setting whatever. All effects have to be produced by vocal inflection and gesture alone.

Above all, the significant thing about Chinese drama is the part music plays in it. Most of their speech is simply vocal declamation, similar in principle to that which was in fact the very beginning of European opera. Music faithfully reflects the passing emotions on the stage.

In the United States the character of the radio inventor is said to differ widely from the regular inventor, due to the large number of people interested in radio. The Patent Office finds every type of inventor in radio work, from the man who has only one idea to patent to those who follow invention as a vocation and experiment with everything new.

A San Francisco radio authority says:—"Some day we will be able to equip our homes with transmitters as well as with receiving sets and send out messages as we may desire. Mark the prophecy, but do not expect early fulfilment of it. Broadcasting is yet in a crude stage. Great refinements will come."

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TENNIS ON THE AIR

VISIT OF THE FRENCH- MEN

The first tennis broadcast in New Zealand will be made by 2YA on Wednesday, January 18, on the occasion of the visit of the match between the French tennis team and New Zealand.

A SUNDAY CONCERT

On Sunday evening, the 15th instant, the members of the Celeste Quartet will render a programme of magnificent items, the concerted numbers of which are that stately measure "As Torrents in Summer," by Elgar, and "Where My Caravan Has Rested," by Herman Lohr. Of the solo numbers, duets and trios, a veritable feast of music is promised. Miss Myra Sawyer, soprano, will be heard in Lambert's song "God's Garden," and this artist can be depended on to give an artistic rendering. In association with Mr. William Boardman, Miss Sawyer will be heard in Gotze's duet "Still as the Night," and with the exceptional blend which these two popular singers achieve in their combined numbers this duet will leave little to be desired. Mr. Boardman's resonant bass will be heard to distinct advantage in "Though Faithless Men," a magnificent aria from the opera "La Hbrea," by Halevy. Miss Mabel Dyer, the contralto of this distinctive combination, will present "Abide With Me" (Liddle), while Mr. Edgar Swan, tenor, will no doubt add to his popularity in that stately solo "Ombra mai Fu," by Handel.

Many listeners seem to think that the new power valves give more volume without distortion on all signals, both weak and strong. This is not true for weak signals. In fact, on extremely weak signals from distant stations the ordinary 201A type valve will give a trifle louder result than the 171 power valve. But the minute you begin to bring in signals with any degree of volume, the advantage of the power valve shows up at once. As the strength of the incoming signal is increased, a point is soon reached where the ordinary 201A is overloaded and distorts badly. For maximum results with any type of power valve, always operate it at the highest B and C voltages recommended by the manufacturer. The 171 valve will give you the most volume with the least distortion on loud signals, but the 171 valve will be better on weak signals because it amplifies a bit more, although it will not handle as much volume as the 171 valve.

One of the most important parts in a radio receiver is the grid condenser. Few seem to realise its effect on the quality and sensitivity of the receiver. A poor condenser in the grid leak is worse than no condenser. Leakage in a condenser is one of the chief faults. The importance of this factor is obvious when one recalls the critical nature of the grid leak. This must be just so, or the circuit will not be sensitive and the quality of the output is likely to be mediocre, or worse. If the grid condenser leaks considerably, it effectively lowers the leakage resistance, and the circuit may be a dud as far as sensitivity is concerned.

Items of interest to farmers in the programmes from 3LO, Melbourne, were the recent broadcasts by Senator Guthrie of descriptions of the wool sales held at Geelong.

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