

THE PERFORMER'S POINT OF VIEW

The following letter was sent to an Auckland paper which has published much matter about broadcasting from the listeners' point of view. But this version of the position did not appeal, and only some of this letter was given publicly. The writer has therefore forwarded to us:—

A great deal has appeared in the Press from the point of view of those who listen in, about the quality of the programmes, and of the artists who broadcast from time to time, but so far as I have not noticed anything from the broadcaster's point of view about listeners-in. I was at the listeners-in meeting here last month, and noticed a number of prominent artists there, and at first I hoped one of these performers would arise and tell the listeners-in on behalf of the others just what they thought of them. However, it was very soon apparent that the meeting had been called to "bait" the Broadcasting Company, and to let one particular speaker have a night out and air his wit, if that is the right word for it; so the artists, and many others who disagreed with most of the speakers (that is, about half those present) lay low and kept their thoughts to themselves. After all, it was the listeners' meeting, they had paid for the hall, so why not let them enjoy themselves?

Now, let me say a word or two from the performer's point of view. The listeners, or many of them, evidently think that the payment of a few pence a week gives them the right to ring up the radio stations, without giving their names, and make offensive remarks or comments on some of the items, because, foolishly, those items do not please their particular taste, although they may be most pleasing to thousands of others listening in. Some of these listeners-in appear to think, too, that they have the right to write offensive, and (of course) anonymous, letters to the artists, and evidently to the company,

too, judging by what one reads in the "Radio Record," objecting to their items. This, mind you, to some of the leading performers in the Dominion, not to mere "try-outs." But in any case, whatever the standing of the performer, he or she is entitled to common courtesy. What on earth has given these people the right to be rude and offensive to the broadcasting artists? Just imagine a state of things where at a public concert members of the audience got up and shouted, "Can't yer stop that woman howling?" or "Why don't you shoot the cows?" and a few other pleasantries of that sort. This is the kind of thing that frequently comes through on the telephone, and yet other listeners-in are good enough at times to write and express the pleasure they have received from these very items. It is about time the listeners realised that no programme or artist can ever please all listeners at the one time. The tastes are much too varied in such a vast audience, which may number 10,000 or even 40,000 or more. Unfortunately most of the people who enjoy the programmes don't bother to write or ring up. It is usually a pestiferous minority who make the noise. After all, how many people actually opposed to the company attended the meeting here in Auckland a few weeks ago? Possibly 150 to 200 out of something like 12,000 subscribers (license holders), and of those 150 or 200 probably not more than 50 were license holders. These folk made a lot of noise, of course, but it was a small percentage, wasn't it? If the dissatisfaction had been in any way general, why, the large Town Hall could not have held them.

Well, listeners, if you don't like an item, or items, shut the darn thing off and try again later. I may not be on then, but don't be rude, or if you must, at least give your name and address.—A REGULAR PERFORMER.

WHY YOU SHOULD LISTEN-IN

(By B Sharp.)

(Specially Written and Voluntarily Supplied to "Radio Record" by a well-known Musician.)

I STARTED learning music when five years old, and it looks as if my youngsters will be like their dad and take to music easily. The old days when I practised 4, 6, and sometimes 8 hours a day proved at times a nuisance because I wanted to play "kick the tin," "fox and hounds," "snowballing," and "tin tack"; still, I will never be able to thank my dear old mother enough for paying the fees for my lessons. I had two lady teachers, then finished off with a master, the result being I can now read almost any music rapidly at sight, can accompany for singers, and have a keen ear for all music, especially instrumental music. Therefore, the remarks which follow are penned by one who can appreciate good music, and without in any way desiring to be egotistical, I offer the following suggestions for what they are worth.

All people love music; music acts upon the nervous system as no drug, tonic, or medicine can possibly act. After a hard day's business, with the nervous system just about ready to break, when men reach home they feel the want of complete quietness and rest from business worries.

Very good; have you seen such a man, after dinner when his friends or child play the piano, or some other instrument, or sings a nice rollicking song? That man changes his whole temperament; from a smileless face, with lines possibly drawn across through worry, probably over his business finances; he suddenly smiles, and within a moment that man's whole countenance has changed completely. His wife shows her pleasure at the change, his children become more frolicsome, and the home atmosphere has turned right round.

Well, now, there are not many to-day who desire to practise; many are too busy to study; others, whilst loving music, have not the desire to test their ability out to see what they can really accomplish.

Others again have no piano, and may feel they cannot afford to buy a piano, on the off chance that one of the family might practise, or some kind neighbour stroll along occasionally and play it for them.

This is where radio broadcasting comes in handy.

I sit in my chesterfield nightly, with my quiet smoke, and paper or book, and I have the musical world—so to speak—at my very feet.

I put on my carpet slippers, rest my weary legs, sit comfortably back and reflect whilst the beautiful music pours forth into the loudspeaker. The strains of some beautiful melody, perhaps one well known to me, come from the broadcast studio or concert hall, probably many miles away.

The marvellous, finest, and most beautiful melodies visit my home all the way from Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Wellington, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, America, Java, Holland, London, Japan, India, and so on; and what do I pay for it? Fees, 2s. 6d. a month, not the price of 50 cigarettes. Remarkable when one thinks for a moment.

The cost of installing a set, of course, enters into the matter; but as reasonable terms can be obtained this should not preclude anyone from becoming a wireless listener.

A crystal, with or without amplifier, will provide excellent entertainment. Consider for a moment the happiness radio brings to the home: You have music waiting for you just when you please; and the kiddies can listen-in to the children's sessions and derive considerable education, musical advancement, and happiness therefrom.

Some people always take a long time to make up their mind to do anything, whilst others enter right into the spirit of the thing and have the satisfaction of obtaining knowledge, education and musical entertainment.

It seems hardly possible that anyone could live in these days without knowing what radio really means; there are, however, many who do not realise the great pleasure to be derived from radio broadcasting.

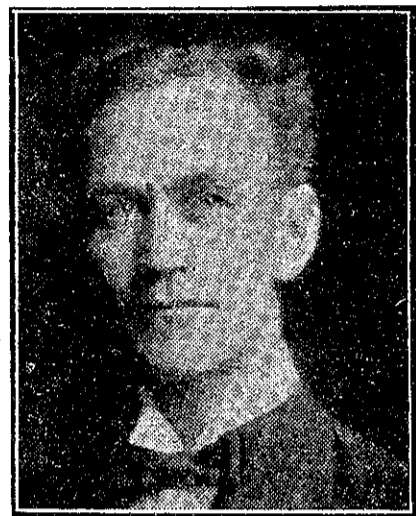
It is simply astonishing the strides and advancement which the radio engineers have achieved. In a few short years we have found out how to transmit music and speech right round the world—truly remarkable.

Are you a listener, I would say in conclusion? If not, let me offer my very best advice as a listener of several years' standing, and a musician of 38 years' standing: Do it now! See your local radio provider, and you will find your home a different one from a social point of view this coming winter.

2YA LOSES UNCLE JASPER

2YA is losing the services of Mr. Clive Drummond as an announcer and as Uncle Jasper. This news will be received with regret by thousands of listeners in grown-up and children alike. Mr. Drummond, who is a member of the Civil Service, has received notice of his transfer, on promotion, to Paeroa, where he is to be postmaster. He will be a considerable loss to radio in New Zealand.

Mr. Drummond was the announcer at old 2YK, the snake-shift station which carried on in Wellington prior to the opening of 2YA, and he did the announcing to the exceeding satisfaction of all listeners. To him was entrusted the announcing on the opening night of 2YA, the most important radio event in New Zealand. It was the Broadcasting Company's way of paying



MR. CLIVE DRUMMOND.

a tribute to Mr. Drummond for his past services, and an acknowledgment of his ability. Since then Mr. Drummond has frequently been heard announcing at 2YA, another special occasion being that of the Maori Radio Pageant.

After the opening of 2YA, Mr. Drummond "broke out" in a new place. He became an uncle, and as Uncle Jasper, with Spot, his dog, he was soon a prime favourite with all the children. In Paeroa a listening-in set will be a very poor substitute for a broadcasting station to Mr. Drummond, who has always been a radio enthusiast—at the transmitting end. Uncle Jasper will be leaving Wellington on Thursday, April 26, and his farewell at Thorndon Station will be broadcast during the children's session.

2YA CHILDREN'S SESSIONS

SERVICE COMMITTEE FORMED.

A conference in respect of the children's sessions at 2YA was attended by Miss Sealy (Girl Guides), Miss Thornton (Training College), Miss Dunlop (Y.W.C.A.), Mr. Mabin (Boy Scouts), Bro. Phelan (Marist Brothers), Mr. Greenberg (Y.M.C.A.), Mr. Anderson (Headmasters' Association), Mr. Howes (Sunday School Union), and "Aunt Dot," "Uncle Jasper," and "Uncle Toby." Mrs. A. R. Hall (principal, children's department), Mr. A. R. Harris, general manager of the company, and Mr. J. Davies, station director to 2YA. The Rev. E. Weeks was elected to the chair as senior "uncle" at the station.

It was resolved that an advisory committee be formed, and the constitution as submitted was adopted. The first committee meeting was fixed for next Tuesday.

Regret was expressed by the chairman at the impending departure of "Uncle Jasper" (Mr. Drummond) from Wellington. Mr. Weeks said a very wide circle of children would be disappointed at their coming loss. Mr. Harris endorsed these remarks, and conveyed to Mr. Drummond the appreciation of the company for his assistance.

CORRECTION NEEDED

The Australian listeners are treated to some strange information regarding the New Zealand broadcast stations by the Sydney "Wireless Weekly."

The following appeared in the issue of April 6:—

"1YA, 2YK, 3YA, and 4YA are all controlled by the New Zealand Broadcasting Company. 2YK is in Wellington, 3YA in Christchurch, and 4YA in Dunedin. There is no transmission from 1YA on Mondays, and on Sunday a church service is broadcast, followed by musical entertainment till 9 p.m., after which the station closes down till Tuesday morning.

"The transmitting equipment at Christchurch is similar to that at Auckland. 4YA broadcasts every day of the week, except Thursday, from 7.45 until 10 p.m. 2YK operates every day of the week, except Wednesday.

"However, 4YA and 2YK are only temporary stations, as are the schedules.

"1YA may be found on 420 metres, and has a power of 500 watts, 2YK works on 295 metres, and 4YA on 380 metres, but the power is comparatively low."

The "Wireless Weekly" might enlighten its readers with the news that there is no station at Wellington using the call-sign 2YK. It has been defunct for many moons. Its readers may be interested to know that the Wellington station, 2YA, 420 metres, 5000 watts aerial power, is the second most powerful broadcast station in the British Empire. Also the wave-length of 4YA is 463 metres, not 380 metres. The hours of transmission by 4YA (and, in fact, of the four stations) are from 3 p.m. not 7.45 p.m.

Variety or Quality in Programmes

The most appropriate comment that we have encountered on the vexed programme question of quality or variety comes from Los Angeles in an interview with Robert Hurd, KFI's programme director. This shows that despite America's greater size and resources her broadcasting stations are encountering exactly the same comments from listeners that are being experienced in New Zealand.

"Fully eighty per cent. of the people registered with American broadcast stations as available radio entertainers are hopelessly mediocre," says Robert Hurd, KFI programme director. "Of the remainder, ten per cent. may be rated fair, five per cent. satisfactory, and five per cent. A1."

"Shall programme directors be governed by the dictates of variety or those of quality in building their programmes?" he continues. "Shall we eliminate the eighty per cent. at once and build our programmes for quality and quality alone, regardless of how often the good artists appear, or shall we run the sad and weary gamut of mediocrity, for the sake of the possible variety demanded by a mythical, restless audience?"

"If we grant that all artists are not equally good, and still insist on using the inferior ones, then we have the ridiculous situation of a station broadcasting, knowingly, and with malice aforethought, inferior programmes by inferior people for no other reason than not to bore John Doe and his radio-party. Poor entertainment by new people will annoy Mr. Doe and his guests more thoroughly than will good entertainment by the same people he heard last night. To-day's metropolitan newspaper is made up of about forty per cent. standard material, while the remaining space is filled with news very like yesterday's, written by the same men who wrote yesterday's news. This week's Satevepost is very like last week's, with the same type of cover and the same type of stories. Would its editors choose in place of a good story by an old author, a mediocre story by a new author just for the sake of variety? The motion picture industry constantly seeks new faces, but does it as a matter of routine choose people it knows are inferior to its stars to be featured in each new picture just for the sake of variety?"

"My personal belief," Mr. Hurd concludes, "is that the variety bugaboo is responsible for much of the hog wash that nightly dilutes our nation's broadcasting.

Needless to say the elements of each night's programmes may and should be diversified.

"Small stations in small communities may find it necessary to use their good artists nightly to maintain a certain standard. Larger stations in musical centres with more people to draw from may broadcast for longer periods before repetition becomes necessary. All stations, however, are now using too many people in the estimation of those who have studied the situation. The broadcaster's watchword should not be 'Is It Different?' but 'Is It Good?'"

DANCING ABROAD

TALKS BY MISS MARGARET O'CONNOR.

Miss Margaret O'Connor, whose name in Wellington is closely associated with the art of dancing, has just returned from a tour of the British Isles, France and America. Taking full advantage of the opportunity afforded by her tour, Miss O'Connor studied under such world-famous teachers as Santos Casain, Barbara Miles, Josephine Bradley and others. Her dancing met with instantaneous success wherever she demonstrated, and Miss Barbara Miles, herself an ex-world's champion, strongly advised Miss O'Connor to remain in London to compete for the professional dancing championship of the world. Miss O'Connor and her partner have been engaged by the Regent Cabaret, Majestic Theatre, and Dixieland Cabaret in Auckland for special exhibitions next month of the modern popular dances. Miss O'Connor will shortly commence a series of lectures on "Doings and Danings in Other Lands," to be broadcast from the studio of 2YA.

A STATION SUED

CAUSES INTERFERENCE.

The Italian Educational Broadcasting Company, operating station WCDA (New York), brought suit for 100,000 dollars: (£20,000) against WOR (New Jersey, New York state), in the Federal court recently. According to Earl W. Dannals, managing director of WCDA, the suit is based on interference caused to his station by WOR, which is owned and operated by L. Bamberger & Co. WOR operates on a frequency of 710 kilocycles, while WCDA works on 1,420 kilocycles. Mr. Dannals said that the interference was caused by WOR's second harmonic, which has a frequency of 1,420 kilocycles, and was due to negligence on the part of the engineers in charge of the Bamberger transmitter who have failed to suppress its energy.

WCDA went on the air last November. Shortly after it commenced operations it received complaints that there was a heterodyne in its channel. Mr. Dannals said engineers connected with his station traced the howl to WOR's second harmonic. He said the Bamberger station was then asked to co-operate in eliminating the interference, but failed to do so. A complaint was then filed with the Federal Radio Commission, he declared, which ordered WOR to correct its harmonics.

C. T. Gannon, assistant director of WOR, admitted that notice had been served upon his company. He said that so far as he knew the suit came as a surprise and that he had no knowledge of the Federal Radio Commission's ever having taken any action in the matter.

MARKET REPORTS

Fruitgrowers and market gardeners will be interested to know that 2YA in future will give, on Monday and Tuesday evenings, between 7 and 8 p.m., the latest market reports supplied by Market Gardeners, Limited (Wellington).

Nominations for Orchestral Item

"RADIO RECORD," P.O. Box 1032, Wellington.

For evening of (fill in day and date)

My request for the open item is

My choice for the repeat item is

Signed

Cheap Autumn Outings by Rail

ANOTHER BIG COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Fathers, mothers, children, cousins, aunts and others, are offered special holiday excursion fares from all stations, from May 3 to 16 (tickets available for return until June 2). Give the young folks a safe and pleasant outing by rail during the school holidays.

Communicate with the nearest Stationmaster, District Manager, or Passenger Agent, for full particulars.