

N.Z. Radio Listeners Guide

SUBSTANTIAL AND HANDSOME PUBLICATION

THE "N.Z. Radio Listeners' Guide" (1928-9, 164 pp.) is now published and in process of distribution. It will, we think, be welcomed as a notably substantial and handsome publication of definite usefulness to listeners. Its compilation has proved exacting and onerous upon the writers engaged, as it was desired to make the publication one worthy of the Dominion and the cause of radio.

Opening with a brief survey of wireless and an examination of the principles of radio, attention is speedily concentrated upon the art of "listening," as a preliminary to which there is given a comprehensive chat about "selecting a set." All factors are covered in relation to prospective needs, after which follows a special section for the crystal user and points about crystal detection.

The needs of the valve set owner are next fully covered in a series of very comprehensive articles, dealing with all parts of the set and equipment.

Next comes the section, "The Servicing of Sets." This section alone makes the book worth while, for packed within the pages covered by it is the experience of an outstandingly competent radio engineer, giving guidance on all difficulties in reception likely to be experienced. This is intended to be particularly useful to the country listener who has not a radio shop just next door.

The history of radio in New Zealand is briefly covered, after which comes "The Listener's Log," as comprehensive a compilation as possible of New Zealand, Australian, and overseas stations, their wavelengths and times of operation. A list of the more important American and Canadian stations may be expected to incite the ambitions of some of our D.X. champions.

A SHORT wave section, contributed largely by Mr. F. W. Sellens, will be of value to all interested. This gives a full list of short wave stations which have been heard on telephony in New Zealand and the hours of reception so far as they can be scheduled. This is supplemented by a few additional stations whose times of operation are not certain. In view of the growing interest in short wave reception a very full account of the construction of a short-wave receiver with full working diagrams and constructional details is given in the constructional section. This describes the circuit which is in point of fact used by Mr. Sellens. A technical description of the screened grid valve indicates the marvellous possibilities of this recent improvement.

CONSTRUCTORS will find their section particularly full and reliable. The articles cover the whole range of crystal reception, one and two-valve amplification, the four-valve circuit, and the short-wave shielded receiver.

A glossary of wireless terms will probably prove one of the most popular sections of the book. This has been specially compiled, and is quite the most comprehensive and compact that we have seen.

Other sections give the law relating to wireless licenses, a list of amateur transmitters, the Morse code, and useful abbreviations.

FOR usefulness and value to constructors and ordinary listeners alike nothing will exceed the special "Valve Guide for each position in the set" compiled with immense patience by "Megohm," and comprising a tabulation of all the main valves on the market to-day. This is supplemented by a valve guide table and other tabular matter of an indispensable character.

Summarising the work, we can say definitely that it reflects credit upon the technical writers of the "Radio Record." It is a definite effort to give listeners a concise and informative volume embracing to the fullest possible extent information continually desired.

The "Guide" may be procured from booksellers and dealers or direct from ourselves—P.O. Box 1032, Wellington. The published price is 2s. 6d., postage 3d.

Notes from Auckland

(By "Listener.")

THE one topic in radio circles this week is the promised orchestra for 1YA. The announcement in the "Record" has been hailed with delight. All valve set owners here are keenly interested in the presentations by the fine band of musicians at 2YA, and few miss going on to 420 metres when that orchestra is scheduled. It has provided us, at this distance, with a rare musical treat, and now that 1YA is also to have its orchestra, there is keen appreciation of the enterprise of the Broadcasting Company, and there are smiles on the faces of many dealers, who foresee a big influx of new business from the additional attraction. Our local trio is an excellent little combination, and to some it has a decided appeal, but it cannot hope to catch the favour of the general body of listeners in the way that a full orchestra will do. The talent is here, and the capabilities of Mr. Bellingham for welding it into a body of which not only the station but also the city will be proud, are undoubted. All radio fans will anxiously await his coming North, as the sign that the promise is within short distance of fulfilment.

IT must be a very pessimistic listener who continues to grumble at the local programmes. Every week they show some distinctive feature of improvement. They are accumulating brightness and variety and the generality of listeners quickly comment upon the fact. The Saturday football relays have missed the genial Mr. W. J. Meredith, who is very well qualified to describe the game he has refereed so long. Mr. Meredith has been away on sick leave, but is now back at the microphone at Eden Park, where he is always a prominent figure. Enthusiastic amateurs whose greatest delight is to contemplate anything new in the way of radio sets, have found much to interest them in the wireless room of the Nauru Chief, the supply ship of the British Phosphate Commission. This vessel carried a half kilowatt telephone set, working on a wave of 720 metres, and effective over a daylight range of 700

miles. The set is used solely to converse with the shore stations of the commission on Nauru and Ocean Islands, each of which has a similar equipment. These two shore stations also provide continuous two-way conversations between the two islands, which are nearly two hundred miles apart. The ship's plant is a splendid example of British workmanship, and, from the accounts of the officers, has fully justified its installation. It has saved the mendless detail, and avoids all that rush of preparation that would otherwise arise when the Nauru Chief arrives at the islands. Officials returning from holiday are enabled to converse with friends ashore, and to pass along instructions even to the preparation of the dinner on day of arrival.

MR. Jordan, operator of the Nauru Chief, has a very high opinion of 1YA. Despite its comparatively low power, it reaches as far up into the Pacific as its bigger Australian cousins, and for clarity of announcement in particular it stands supreme. Missionaries in the Solomons, and traders throughout the South Pacific, all know 1YA, which does as much as any other broadcasting plant to relieve the monotony of island life. Hearing it 1500 miles away, and comparing it with 2YA, it is hard to believe that it is only one tenth of the power of the Wellington station.

WELLINGTON reception here just now is better than it has ever been. Whether this is due to exceptional atmospheric conditions, or to improvements in the South the writer knows not, but, both by day and by night 2YA comes in with splendid audibility, and without that pronounced fading that marked its operation some months ago. And, as for the programmes—well, they are better than the Auckland ones, and that is saying something.

SPORTING

RACING AND RUGBY

NEXT WEEK'S BROADCASTS.

June 2—Auckland Racing Club's Great Northern meeting, first day (by courtesy of the club), 1YA.
Rugby Football.—Athletic Park, 2YA; Lancaster Park, 3YA; Carisbrook, 4YA.

AUCKLAND COMEDY PLAYERS

UNDER the direction of Mr. H. Montague, this combination of players continue to present bright and entertaining comedy attractions at 1YA, and on 25th inst. they will put on the air Houghton's delicious one-act comedy, "Just Fancy." This is one of the brightest and wittiest short plays of the present generation. The situations are hilariously funny, and the dialogue has a laugh in every line. The cast includes Miss Mary Norwood, Miss Irene Day, J. F. Montague, and J. N. Gordon, all experienced and capable artists. On Friday, June 1, at 1YA, Mr. J. F. Montague and his company of players will present an arresting one-act play, "Campbell of Kil-mohr." The setting of the play is Scotland, after the rebellion of '45, when the Young Pretender's attempt to capture the English throne from the House of Brunswick had failed. The play is intensely dramatic and ends on a note of tragedy. Nothing quite so powerful has previously been attempted on the air in New Zealand, but the producer feels confident of the result. The characters are mainly Scottish, and Mr. Montague has taken special pains to secure a cast of Scottish players to suit the respective parts. The majority of the players on this occasion will be making their "first appearance" on the air, so that listeners cannot complain of want of change in this direction.

"The School for Scandal"

Richard Brinsley Sheridan's comedy, first presented in London in 1777, can never lose its place as the wittiest comedy of the English stage. For sheer audacity and power of construction, the famous "screen" scene has never been equalled at any time in any country, and the "Quarrel" scenes between Sir Peter and Lady Teagle are comedy of the highest order. On Friday, June 15, at 1YA, two of these scenes, blended into one, will be presented by Mr. J. F. Montague, Miss Melzie Johnston and Mr. Hellyer. Miss Johnston is a young player of the greatest promise, who is making her first "appearance" on the air, and will be heard in the wonderful comedy role of Lady Teagle. Mr. Montague will be Sir Peter.

'TIP-TOP PROGRAMMES'

APPRECIATION FROM OVERSEAS

A VICTORIAN correspondent writes the following appreciative letter to 2YA:—

"I must write to let you know what I think of your station and the programmes you put over. I have only a four-valve receiver working off a 40ft. aerial, 45ft. high, but the reception from your station is wonderful. At times it is that loud that it is uncomfortable, and we have to cut down the volume. It sure shows some of the local stations some points as far as the programme goes. 3LO, Melbourne, comes first in my estimate, then 2YA a close second. Although in the summer months here the static is sometimes deafening, I usually manage to get your station at least once a week. However, in the winter months we have no trouble at picking up 2YA, but the other New Zealanders are hard to get even on the 'phones."

"I am enclosing a snap of the set on which I receive 2YA. As you will see, it is no special set, but just the usual standard Browning-Drake circuit. I have it out in a tent, and I have some trouble with dust, which is rather plentiful here. You can see by the size of the speaker that we have to have some volume to make it uncomfortable to listen to."

"I wish you every success in the future, and am looking forward to hearing some more of your tip-top programmes this winter."

ALL BLACKS' TOUR

BROADCASTING OF RESULTS

JUDGING by the correspondence which the Broadcasting Company receives, there seems to be a lingering hope that running descriptions of the matches in South Africa will be re-broadcast by the New Zealand stations.

It can be stated definitely once again that this cannot be done, for technical reasons. No one regrets this more than does the Broadcasting Company. Careful investigations by the Broadcasting Company last year, when the tour was decided upon, proved this. The Broadcasting Company was the first to realise the importance which would attach to a broadcast description, and even considered the sending of its sports announcer to South Africa. The technical side of the problem, however, presented insuperable difficulties, and the proposal was definitely ruled out.

Under the circumstances, the company has made the best arrangements possible, namely, that the results of each match shall be cabled at once and broadcast with the opening announcement when the stations next go on the air. For instance, the results of Saturday games will be announced by 1YA and 2YA at 3 o'clock on Sundays, and by 3YA and 4YA at 5.45.

NEW STUDIOS FOR 2YA

GREATLY IMPROVED FACILITIES

ALTERATIONS and improvements have lately been effected at 2YA. Hitherto only one floor of the building has been utilised, but the demands of the service have now necessitated that the office staff should be moved downstairs, thus leaving more accommodation upstairs for artists.

Two new studios have been formed by converting the ladies' lounge and the general office (on either side of the station director's office) into studios. This has been effected by means of large plate glass windows in the dividing walls and by the installation of an intricate system of wiring for microphone and switches.

The wiring system is very complete. There is a main control panel in the announcer's room, but each studio has its own panel of buttons and switches. There is a system of coloured lights in each studio which designate which studio is on the air, and, when required, announcements can be made and orchestras, bands, vocalists, or any kind of "turn" can be broadcast from any studio.

The additional studios will greatly increase the efficiency of 2YA. There will now be more facilities to aid artists in their practising, and the working of the station when on the air will be greatly helped.

TRACKED TO ITS LAIR

CHRISTCHURCH "ROARER" LOCATED

AN INTERESTING SEARCH.

FOR some time past valve-set users in Christchurch have endured considerable interference from a source that no one was able to locate. The locating of such sources being a very difficult matter. The interference in question was dubbed "the roarer" by the radio editor of the "Star," and as such it became known.

But Nemesis was on his track. Three radio sleuths were set out to find him, and they did their work in a systematic manner. The investigators were Mr. J. M. Bingham, chief engineer of the Radio Broadcasting Company, Mr. Head, deputy radio inspector for Christchurch, and Mr. G. Blogg.

They arranged to take bearings whenever the "roarer" was in action. These bearings were taken from different parts of the city, and when plotted on a map it was found that the lines crossed in the vicinity of a large private hospital. It therefore seemed evident that it was the violet ray plant in this hospital that was responsible for the "roaring."

On Tuesday night last the interference was definitely located. The "roarer" was in his best voice, so the search party at once went to the locality whence they thought the noise came. To make sure they took another bearing on their direction-finding apparatus. Yes, it was the hospital. But they thought that they would circle the block to eliminate all doubt.

The next bearing suggested that it was not the hospital at all! Surely the tramline must be responsible for this change of direction on the part of the apparatus. They would try another corner of the block where there would be no induction from tram lines.

"The roarer!" Without a doubt. But not from the direction of the hospital! A doctor's house in the vicinity was indicated.

THE car, the apparatus and the searchers took up their position outside the doctor's gate. There was no doubt now. "The roarer" was still going at full blast, and the direction-finder pointed straight to a lighted window in the doctor's residence.

The investigators waited until a patient left, and then they went in to interview Dr. Thacker, to whom they explained matters. Dr. Thacker listened with a sympathetic ear, and undertook to arrange the times for the treatment of his patients so as to keep "the roarer" off the air during broadcasting hours.

Mr. Bingham was acting in an unofficial capacity, and Canterbury listeners are indebted to him as well as to Mr. Head and to Mr. Blogg for giving up their time on many evenings, also to Dr. Thacker who so promptly offered, once his attention had been drawn to the interference caused, to keep "the roarer" quiet during broadcasting hours.

AN experience similar to the foregoing has been the lot of listeners in various towns on the South Coast of England, where the violet ray is extensively used for therapeutic purposes. The "Morning Post" says:—With the increasing use of the rays the position has become little short of intolerable, for Brighton and Hove contain a vast number of nursing homes and hospitals where the rays are much in use, and broadcasting is turned from a pleasure into torture.

One sufferer told a tale typical of many others. "Wireless reception has always been difficult here," he said, "because of the close proximity of the South Downs, but fairly high-powered sets had done much to overcome this. Now, however, the extensive use of violet rays for medical treatment is spoiling our pleasure entirely."

"We know that the rays are far more important than wireless music, but is there not some way by which condensers or earths may be applied to obviate the interruption. The noise is horrible—just like a circular saw in motion—and as luck will have it, it is usually at its worst between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m., just when the best programmes are coming through. Once the violet rays start it is quite impossible to hear anything else."

The B.B.C. state that these difficulties can be overcome by the use of a certain type of "smoothing circuit" which will shortly be procurable.

Violet rays are not the only electrical agents which may interfere with reception, according to an official of the B.B.C. The use of a vibro-massage machine may interfere with the reception, not only of the shop in which it is being used, but with that in the houses near. It is very difficult to locate this trouble.

"There will shortly be on the market a 'smoothing circuit,' of which the final tests are now being made," he stated, "and we hope that this will deal effectively with these interruptions."

BAND BROADCASTS

AN INTERESTING CONFESSION.

An interesting confession was made by Mr. B. Palliser at the final meeting forming the 2YA Musical and Dramatic Committee. Mr. Palliser, who is a member of the executive of the North Island Band Association, on being voted to the chair, expressed his pleasure at the opportunity of being present, and said that he was glad of the invitation to participate in such a committee aiming at forwarding music through the influence of broadcasting. Mr. Palliser went on to confess that formerly he had been rather opposed to broadcasting band music. When the proposal had been made in connection with the band festival held in Wellington a year or so ago to broadcast some of the proceedings, he had strenuously opposed it. He now felt that his earlier action had perhaps not been wise, and that more benefit might have been secured to band interests by a judicious co-operation with broadcasting than by taking the stand he did. He was free to confess that he could now see further than he had been able to before, and thought that ways and means could be devised by which broadcasting could co-operate with special functions organised by the bands in a way to mutually benefit both.

Hellesen Radio Batteries

THE BEST IN THE WORLD

DOES THIS NAME MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?

HELLESEN STANDS FOR BETTER RESULTS, LONGER LIFE, AND GREATER EFFICIENCY IN YOUR SET.

Large Stocks Carried by

SOLE N.Z. AGENTS.

John Chambers & Son, Ltd.

AUCKLAND, WELLINGTON, CHRISTCHURCH, DUNEDIN, AND INVERCARGILL.