

B.B.C.'s Engineer

CAPTAIN ECKERSLEY UNHAPPY

DISSATISFIED WITH B.B.C.

A WRITER in a London exchange states:—

"I understand that Captain Eckersley, the popular Chief Engineer of the British Broadcasting Corporation, is cumulatively unhappy about the preposterous delay of the Post Office in sanctioning the whole new regional scheme of distribution. Unless a more accommodating attitude is shown in official circles I should not be surprised to see Captain Eckersley leave the B.B.C. and join some concern in the trade, or start a commercial show on his own."

"He is known to have received a number of most tempting offers in the past three years; but up to the present his hopes of the regional scheme were strong enough to resist the lure of rapid wealth. But even Captain Eckersley's patience is not unlimited, and if he receives many more buffets from officialdom, I would not be at all surprised to discover him in the trade, where he would be royally welcomed. It would be an intriguing situation. The first set marketed with Captain Eckersley's name and authority behind it might well reap a considerable fortune for all concerned."

THE partly Government-controlled British Broadcasting Corporation has been the butt of a considerable amount of criticism in the Home journals. Instead of displaying virility and enterprise, the corporation has, it is urged, put the brake on the remarkable progress of broadcasting which was so characteristic of the company who formerly controlled broadcasting in Great Britain. To Captain Eckersley is due great praise not only for the summit reached by the technical perfection of broadcasting in Great Britain, but the general organisation of the service. American radio men who visit Great Britain from time to time freely admit that the transmission by the British stations is unequalled in the United States. Seeing that Captain Eckersley has been in charge of the technical side of broadcasting from its inception in Great Britain, and that he is still improving the service, it would be a severe loss to the listening public if he severed his connection with the British Broadcasting Corporation. This is another instance of the disadvantage of Government interference with private enterprise, and the British Press has published many letters condemning the taking over of the original broadcasting company by the Government.

Television

CHALLENGE TO BAIRD

£1000 OFFERED FOR SUCCESSFUL PROOF

THE English radio magazine, "Popular Wireless," is not convinced that the methods of television adopted by Baird are likely to be completely successful, and has issued a challenge, offering to pay £1000 for a successful demonstration over a distance of 25 yards. It is pointed out that television is vastly different from photo transmission, which is now in successful operation. Sir Oliver Lodge backs up the paper in a warning to amateurs not to expect too much.

"POPULAR WIRELESS" says: "Wireless television during the last few months has received an extraordinary amount of publicity, and there can be no question that the majority of people are under the impression that the television problem has at last been solved, and that before very long a wireless television service will be inaugurated."

"Component parts for television models have, in fact, already been advertised, and Mr Baird himself, at a recent luncheon given in his honour, has stated that amateurs with wireless television receivers may listen in after midnight to his station working at Long Acre, London, on a wavelength of 45 metres, and will hear a peculiar humming noise, which, with the necessary apparatus, they may transform into pictorial images."

"The question of what constitutes pictorial images is one which has not been clearly explained, and for that reason alone it is clear, from the correspondence we have received, and from the remarks we have heard expressed by members of the general public, that there is a prevalent impression that with a wireless television receiving apparatus to-day it is possible to receive in one's home moving pictures by wireless. And although

that is tempered by the belief that these pictures are crude, it is equally obvious that the public do not realise how crude these pictures are.

There is a Difference.

FURTHERMORE, instructions have been published elsewhere regarding the construction of home television receiving sets, and, as we pointed out in a recent issue of this journal, advice has been offered to the effect that when working these machines a high-tension supply of six or seven hundred volts should be used.

Mr. Kendall, the chief of our Research and Construction Department, has rightly pointed out that the use of such a voltage by people unaccustomed to electrical work may prove serious in the extreme, for even six 100-volt E.T. batteries wired up in series may give a fatal shock.

In view of all this, and in particular in view of the optimism expressed in connection with the Baird Television System, we are making a friendly challenge to Mr. Baird to televise by radio, before a select and impartial investigatory committee, a series of objects, and if Mr. Baird can do this over a distance of twenty-five yards (using any power he likes providing the power at the receiving and at the transmitting ends is not taken from the same source), we will willingly accept the verdict of the committee, and, if favourable to Mr. Baird, pay him £1000.

In our opinion, and in the opinion of Sir Oliver Lodge, our scientific adviser-in-chief, and in the opinion of one of our scientific consultants, Dr. J. H. T. Roberts—and furthermore in the opinion of many other scientific men whom we have privately consulted—a strong public warning is necessary with regard to television. And we feel that some means should be adopted in order to demonstrate that, although wireless television is scientifically not an impossibility, it has not yet by any means reached a stage whereby it can be termed or regarded as a public utility service.

Nor, in the opinion of our scientific advisers, is it scientifically correct to assume that certain known systems are capable of development to an extent or likely to mature in such a way as

to provide a public television service in the near future.

There are other systems of wireless television, in particular a system which makes use of cathode rays, which suggest possibilities, but Mr. Baird, for example, still clings to a system which was demonstrated in this country some time ago; and an official of the Baird Wireless Television Development Co. has made statements, which have appeared in the daily Press, to the effect that further improvement as regards detail are in themselves details.

More Than Details Ahead.

ON scientific grounds we contest such statements and, as a result, make public this friendly challenge to Mr. Baird. We sincerely hope that Mr. Baird will accept this challenge, and nothing would give us greater pleasure than to be proved wrong in our belief that his system has definite limitations.

It would be a matter of great gratification to us to find that Mr. Baird, on accepting our challenge, could successfully carry out the details of the contest we suggest elsewhere in this issue, and thus win the £1000. We ourselves should be the first to congratulate him.

Wireless television will undoubtedly become a practical proposition in the future. Whether it will be in the near future or whether many, many years will have to pass before the enormous difficulties which now confront the problem have been obviated, remains to be seen. In the words of our scientific adviser: "It is foolish these days to say that anything is impossible." And we at least claim that we have never taken up such an attitude with regard to wireless television as a whole.

But in the interests of our readers and in the interests of those who are inclined to feel unduly optimistic because of certain recent experiments in television we have issued this challenge to Mr. Baird in the hope that it will help clearly to indicate what we consider to be, and what our scientific consultants consider to be, the exact position of television to-day; and that it will have the effect of dispelling many erroneous impressions which have been so current of late.

Scientist's Warning.

SIR OLIVER LODGE in concluding an article writes:—"I think it advisable and perhaps necessary to issue a caution to the public, and incidentally to the Press, reiterating my assertion that the subject of television is quite in its infancy, that it is not as yet possible to purchase any apparatus likely to be successful, and that no amateur is likely to be able to adapt apparatus working in connection with a wireless receiver for the purpose of seeing moving objects at a distance."

"If television is in its infancy, home reception of its results by wireless aid is still more in the future, and in all probability in the somewhat distant future."

"I would not say anything to dissuade amateurs from experimenting, but it seems only fair to issue this caution, in order to minimise over-

enthusiastic rumours and prevent disappointment. If this attitude is considered over-conservative, then I must be content to plead guilty to that accusation, so far as my present knowledge extends."

"No one can say that anything is finally impossible; but it is fairly safe to say that a given development has not yet been achieved. As far as I know about the attitude of other scientific men I think I am in agreement with them. I shall rejoice if the labours of Mr. Baird and other workers, in this country and in America, are able to falsify this caution within what remains of my own lifetime."

THE PACIFIC FLIGHT

VALUE OF RADIO

From a Press report of the reception of the trans-Pacific aviators in Sydney we take the following tribute to the value of radio in aerial navigation and as a means of communication. Describing the arrival, the account says:

"It was a wonderful scene, and thousands who did not witness it heard it described in detail over the wireless. And when one comes to think of it, what a wonderful part wireless has played right throughout the flight. Never for more than a quarter of an hour was the 'plane out of touch with land. This is regarded as the most spectacular success for wireless in an era when the world is marvelling at radio achievements. Mr. Warner was able to keep his apparatus going the whole time, even as the aeroplane battled its way through pitch-dark nights and was buffeted hither and thither by terrific wind and rainstorms. Never in the history of aviation or of radio has there been such a romantic achievement. It mattered not whether the aeroplane, in dodging the storms and almost impenetrable clouds, was forced to within a few hundred feet of the water, or compelled to rise to great altitudes, turning sharply to right or to left, Darner let the world know what was happening. Trained radio receivers knew instinctively, by the tone of the messages and the manner of their transmissions, almost every movement of the 'plane. And even listeners comfortably seated in their own homes heard the Morse signals as they were relayed by a Sydney station. They heard, too, the constant roar of the engine as the 'plane was coming from Suva to Brisbane. Thousands of people sat up all night so as not to miss the progress reports."

As a result of the flight, too, the world has probably entered upon a new era in aerial navigation. Through the agency of Lyon, Kingsford Smith was aware of his true position at all stages of the long flight of 6326 nautical miles, except for two brief intervals. This has probably revolutionised flying by increasing the margin of safety, as wireless has increased the safety of sea travel in the last decade."

IYA'S ALL-NIGHT SESSION

THE manner in which IYA handled the flight of the Southern Cross from Suva to Brisbane has received well merited praise from all quarters. This station was on the air all night.

The following is an extract from one of the many letters forwarded to the station:—

"Please accept from a listener-in great appreciation and many thanks for the very thorough arrangements by which the 'Trisco to Brisbane flight could be radioed throughout the vigil of the night and up to the moment of the airmen's triumph. Every listener-in will be feeling the same, and proud of our IYA station for the completeness of its undertakings for the benefit of all who are on the wireless."

A RECENT visitor to Wellington was Mr. Eric Dare, sales promotion director for Philips Lamps, Ltd., Australasia. Mr. Dare states that business in Australia is good. The company's Sydney branch employs a staff of ninety.



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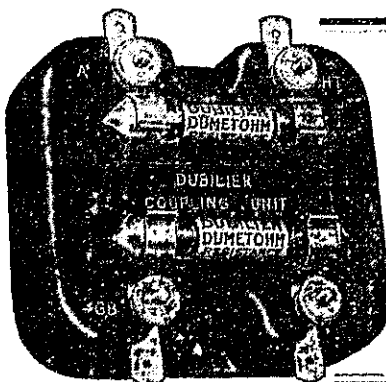
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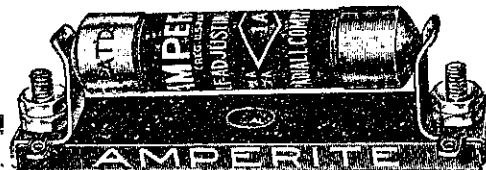
Address: 2YA/0, Radio Record, P.O. Box 1032, Wellington.

I desire to nominate the following items for "repeats" next week:—

Monday (Classic)
Tuesday (Operatic)
Friday (Popular)
Saturday (Vaudeville)

Signed

Votes may be recorded for one or for all of the nights mentioned. This selection is made at mid-day for the evening affected. Voting papers receivable till noon. Distant listeners may send forward their Monday and Tuesday's votes if desired, in order to be in time, and follow later with Friday's and Saturday's wishes. The coupon is inserted for convenience, and may be supplemented in writing.



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P.M. 3 P.M. 4		1S	
P.M. 5 P.M. 5A			150
P.M. 6			150
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