

Auckland Notes

(By Listener.)

DURING recent evenings the weather conditions have been unkind to those who have tried beyond local stations for reception. Cyclonic conditions have brought an infliction of static in their train, and fading, too, has been peculiarly prevalent. On Sunday last both Wellington and Australian reception fluctuated badly in volume, an annoyance for which no one could blame the transmission.

LOCAL dealers report that the radio trade has been decidedly on the up-grade for some time, and they anticipate that when the next official figures regarding licenses are published Auckland will have made up most if not all of the leeway shown in previous returns.

SCENE: A room in a private hospital. The patient lies abed, but within reach of his hand are the dials of a portable receiver. He was the fortunate possessor of a machine of this type, and as soon as the doctor granted permission, had it transferred from his home to his bedside, where it plays its part in whiling away the long hours of convalescence. It is needless to remark that there are numerous requests from other rooms in the hospital for a loan of the portable.

THE news that the Tasman flight will shortly be attempted by the Southern Cross has given a flip to the learning of Morse. Those who are fortunate enough to be proficient in the telegraphist's art are already being besieged by friends who wish to come along on the fateful evening and ascertain at first hand the progress of the plane.

BY the island boat this week there came to Auckland a radio set in which a transformer had broken down. Accompanying the set was a letter from a lonely South Seas trader who implored that the set be repaired immediately and returned by the same boat, because, since the accident happened, he had only come to realise how lonely life could be away from civilisation when one was deprived of the one means of keeping in regular touch with the news and the entertainment of the outside world.

2YA ranks as a prime favourite with Aucklanders on a Sunday evening. There is something about the Wellington programmes that follow the church services which makes one tune in 2YA. On Sunday last the varied band items, the solos and the selections rendered by the Maoris, provided a most acceptable change from our local radio fare.

THE annual meeting of the Listeners' League, eventuates on Monday evening—our local silent night. Through the courtesy of the Radio Broadcasting Company the meeting is receiving good publicity over the air.

ON Wednesday last the Auckland Town Hall was engaged for a political meeting, and in consequence the regular organ recital relay had to be abandoned. The staff at 2YA rose to the occasion, however, and quite a good programme was broadcast from the studio. Among the contributors were those two favourites Miss Phyllis Hazell and Mr. Frank Sutherland.

THE broadcasting of accounts of football matches is not altogether a pleasant job. On Saturday last at Eden Park the wind, blowing with cyclonic force, was swamping sheets of rain right up into the members' stand, where Mr. W. J. Meredith at the microphone battled with the elements, as did the players on a sodden field. As he described the incidents of a muddy game he had to wave away raucous-voiced newspaper boys who seem to delight in the privilege of getting on the air at sports gatherings. There were few spectators at the park on the day, but it is safe to say that the absentees were either at their own or their neighbours' receiving sets.

SO successful has been the picking up and relaying the signals of 5SW in South Africa, that quite a boom in broadcasting has resulted in the Cape Town district.

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APPLAUSE FOR 3YA

A CANDID LISTENER WRITES

THE first appearance of the Woolston Band at 3YA on Monday, June 18, aroused great interest, and as the band items were supported by an equally excellent programme, letters of appreciation have been pouring in to the Broadcasting Company. One, whom we will call "Cashmere," thus discourses on things in general:—

"Many thanks for the prompt reply to my letter concerning the Kingsford Smith arrival. Despite one or two defects (no fault on this side) it was splendid and was appreciated by a little group of crystal owners whom I invited along and (needless to say) myself! I wish to add my congratulations to 3YA for the unique service rendered during the Jubilee celebrations. Then, again, praise is due for the inauguration of Sunday afternoon sessions and also the football result session."

"The squealing in the Press regarding organ recitals is really funny, and so is the chief argument of one writer that the license decrease is a result of 3YA's unpopularity because of no organ recitals. In view of the wonderful recovery of Canterbury's total it is obvious that our local station is leading the way in many respects."

"Now for some growls! a real 'gem' on humour, should 'dodge' dramatic stuff. (item) was damn bad! — (clever instrumentalist) should be restrained from tin whistle solos. The one on Friday sounded like a murder! So many gasps and gurgles. — can perform pretty badly on quite a variety of wind instruments, but the 'sax' is the chief horror. I'm ready to run on Wednesday!"

"Well, now having delivered myself of those nice charitable comments, I will close by saying that in eighteen months of devotion to 3YA I have never heard a better concert than this evening's! Woolston Band—great! And the assisting artists—ditto!"

Another Tribute.

"BEING a listener-in for the last 16 months—first with a crystal set, and, for the last 12 months, a valve set, with an experience of all New Zealand stations, and also Australian stations, it is with pleasure that I desire to acknowledge the very fine concert put out by 3YA on Monday evening, the 18th inst. The Woolston Band was a real treat—harmony good, splendidly in tune all through, whilst the solos, duets, trios and quartets were a sheer delight to listen to. The programme was nicely varied, and every item was particularly good of its class. Being an enthusiast on wireless concerts, I have made many inquiries amongst my friends re the quality of Monday's concert, and they one and all agree with me that, taken as a whole, it was easily the best concert yet put out by 3YA."

A STATION SILENCED

AMERICAN DISCIPLINE

FOR the first time since the United States Government has controlled radio, a broadcasting station has been taken off the air for being off its frequency, or wavelength.

The Government Radio Commission has notified WNBA, Forest Park, Ill., "to discontinue operation until further notice," for "wobbling."

Michael T. Rafferty, of Station WNBA, has been notified that "due to your consistent violation of commission's General Order No. 7 specifying maximum deviation from frequency assignment, you are hereby ordered to discontinue operation until further notice."

While the commission has several times threatened to use "strong arm" methods if stations did not stay within a reasonable distance of their frequency, this is the first instance in which the threat has been carried out, and it may be an indication that similar methods will be used in the future.

Complaints against the station have been coming into the commission for a long time, it is understood. It first went on the air in February, 1927, with a permit to use from 3000 to 5000 watts power. This was later reduced to 500 watts, and on June 15, 1927 it was cut to 200 watts. It operates on 1440 kilocycles.

The radio supervisor at Chicago is said to have cautioned the station several times for being off its wavelength, the deviation having been as much as 500 cycles.

Commissioner Sam Pickard, who is in charge of the Chicago zone, was told that this station was continually "interfering with good programmes."

T'OTHER FROM WHICH

GRAMOPHONE RECORD OR VOICE?

A NOVELTY feature of 3YA's programme on Monday evening was the broadcasting of gramophone reproductions of songs sung by Mr. Percy Nicholls, tenor, and of the same songs sung by him personally in the studio. Listeners were not informed by the announcer as to which was which, but were invited to decide for themselves.

In the case of the first song, "Ave Maria," the record was put on first and electrically reproduced, to be followed



MR. PERCY NICHOLLS.

by Mr. Nicholls's own voice. In the case of the second song, "Vale," Mr. Nicholls sang first.

Numerous people at once rang up the studio and many rang up Mr. Nicholls at his home. Still more have written to the studio. Opinion as to which was the record and which the voice have been fairly evenly divided, and the decisions arrived at have been based on a variety of clues. The test proved a great compliment to the excellence of electrically-reproduced records.

The records in question were made when Mr. Nicholls was recently in Sydney.

Some further interesting experiments in the utilisation of records in co-operation with the human voice can be looked forward to from 3YA.

AVIATORS "ON THE AIR"

THE TRANSATLANTIC FLIGHT

SPEECHES BROADCAST.

UNACCOMPANIED by the uproar of street celebrations and unhurried by welcoming crowds, the crew of the plane Drenen recently told the audiences of WOR, New York, and Columbia Broadcasting System stations about their trip from Baldonnell to Greenly Island. Baron von Huenefeld was the first of the famous trio to speak, and his remarks seemed to concern the financial preparations for the aerial expedition. As on the occasion of the banquet, his words were not easily understood, but his gratitude for the honours accorded him was unmistakable and gracious.

CAPTAIN KOEHL, the second principal in the three-cornered broadcast, told his version of the flight in German. To this unpractised linguist, the captain's description seemed fervent and full of adjectives; though just what was said remains a mystery.

Major Fitzmaurice commenced his tale with the news that he and his German companions had made separate and unsuccessful attempts to fly across the Atlantic last year. After describing the Baldonnell preliminaries to the Bremen flight he took up the detailed account of the actual flight, with data as to altitude and weather coupled effectively to notes on food and feelings. His speech was the longest of the three, as was to be expected, and before it was over his voice was hoarse.

The broadcast, arranged by the sponsors of the Kolster hour, set out to present the first calm radio appearance of the aviators and to let them tell their stories as they would. It achieved its purpose fully and did so with an absence of announcer's hoop-la that was refreshing.

OIL TANKER'S WIRELESS

THE wireless equipment of the Ranja, an oil tanker recently in Wellington, is probably the most complete in any cargo vessel afloat. Besides a wireless direction finder, her apparatus includes a short-wave set, which enables her to keep in touch with Norway from any part of the world. The Ranja, which is owned by a Norwegian firm, keeps in constant communication with the whalers in the Antarctic. Although she does not carry a special wireless operator, the second officer finds time to produce a daily newspaper, and the officers and crew are thus able to read the latest news items from all over the world, during the long and uneventful journeys of the tanker.

WEATHER REPORTS

THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE.

A COUNTRY reader recently wrote suggesting that the weather forecast be broadcast each evening at a definite period. It was stated that on some occasions the hour of 9 o'clock was sometimes anticipated, and country listeners who were depending upon receiving the latest weather information were disappointed. Following on this letter "we have inquired closely into the position, and for the sake of our country readers, would like to explain just what arrangements are possible in connection with the admittedly important distribution of the weather forecast.

In the first place, it is necessary that the information broadcast be authentic. Arrangements are accordingly made with the Post and Telegraph Department, by which the Dominion report as prepared by the Government Meteorologist is telegraphed to different stations at the earliest possible moment in the evening. Owing to the fact, however, that this official report is prepared from data collected from one end of the Dominion to the other, it is not always possible for the report to be telegraphed to the different stations in time for broadcasting through the news session. In point of fact, on the average the report generally comes to hand at stations, somewhere between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m.

In response, however, to several requests that the official report be broadcast during the news session also, the Post and Telegraph recently arranged with the Broadcasting Company that the telegraphing of the reports should be speeded up so as to reach stations before the conclusion of the news session, and on such occasions as they do they are broadcast then in addition to being announced once during the concert session.

It will be obvious to readers that in the circumstances, and having regard to the necessity on occasion of the Meteorological Department requiring more time than another for the preparation of this forecast, and having regard also to the possibility of occasional delays in transmission, it is impossible for the Broadcasting Company to guarantee that the report will be available on every occasion during the news session. For that reason the standard time of 9 p.m. has been fixed.

Since writing the foregoing, the suggestion has reached us from one country reader that one station might broadcast at 9 p.m., and to provide for the possibility of some listeners missing that particular station's broadcast, another station, say, 2YA, should broadcast at a regular hour of, say, ten minutes past nine, so that country listeners to whom the report is of importance, might have the opportunity of a second string to their bow.

PORTABLES ON CONTINENT

GAINING IN FAVOUR.

PORTABLE sets are gaining greatly in favour in France, where this type of receiver has lagged behind considerably in popularity as compared with Great Britain. During the special wireless motor races of last year the manufacturers as well as the public awoke to the special needs of this class of set. The same thing is true, to a large extent, in Germany, where the portable set has been greatly improved, and some new and interesting portable models were shown at the Berlin Exhibition at the beginning of April.



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Signed

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