

Much Organisation Necessary to Serve the Listener

MOST people, even those unfamiliar with its mechanical technique, are interested in the scientific side of radio broadcasting; but the side with which it is proposed to deal here is that which translates the potential power of transmission into an organised service. To this end a highly-specialised system of organisation is necessary. The purpose of this article is to afford listeners an insight into the widespread ramifications of the system needed to take care of the many sides of an efficient broadcasting service.

In the year 1924-1925, the Right Honourable J. G. Coates, Postmaster-General and Minister of Telegraphs, and later Prime Minister of New Zealand, introduced and sponsored legislation covering rigid control of radio broadcasting in New Zealand, empowering the Government to enter into an agreement for the development of Dominion broadcasting under private enterprise and Government regulation. The Act also introduced the principle of licensing listeners by payment of a fee for the support of the service.

On July 18, 1925, Sir James Parr, Postmaster-General and Minister of Telegraphs, in exercise of the authority conferred under the above Post and Telegraph Amendment Act, 1924, entered into an agreement with William Goodfellow and Ambrose Reeves Harris for the formation of a company to undertake a radio telephone broadcasting service for the Dominion of New Zealand.

ON August 22, 1925, the Radio Broadcasting Company of New Zealand Limited, was incorporated to inaugurate the service. On the one part, in terms of the agreement, the company was required to purchase the existing stations at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and to establish, maintain, and operate up-to-date stations at these centres in accordance with the Act and the Broadcasting Regulations, 1925. On the other part, the Minister of Telegraphs undertook that the Post and Telegraph Department would collect certain fees, which under the original Act and its subsequent amendments are fixed as follows:—

Dealers' Licenses.

- (a) Class 1 license, £10 per annum.
- (b) Class 2 license, £5 per annum.
- (c) Class 3 license, £2 per annum.
- (d) Class 4 license, £2 per annum.

Receiving Station Licenses.

- (a) 1. Ordinary license, £1 10s. per annum.
- 2. Special license, £5 per annum.
- 3. Temporary license, 10s. per week.
- (b) Amateur transmitting and receiving station license, £2 2s. per annum.
- (c) Experimental station license, £2 2s. per annum.

Of the license fees so collected to pay to the company 25s. for every ordinary receiving license fee collected and 90 per cent. of every other license fee collected.

UPON incorporation, the existing stations at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin were taken over by the company, and operated until such time as the proposed new stations were completed. On August 7, 1926, an entirely new and up-to-date station, equipped with Western Electric apparatus, having an antenna rating of 500 watts, was officially opened at France Street, Auckland, by the Hon. William Nosworthy, Postmaster-General and Minister of Telegraphs. On September 1, 1926, 3YA, a similar plant, was put into operation at 55 Hereford Street, Christchurch, while a new building for the station was being erected. On February 11, 1927, this new station was officially opened in its permanent home at 200-202 Gloucester Street, Christchurch, by the Hon. William Nosworthy, Postmaster-General and Minister of Telegraphs.

ON July 16, 1927, 2YA, a new and up-to-date station equipped with a 5000-watt Standard Telephones and Cables, Limited plant, having its transmitting station situated at Mount Victoria, Wellington, and its studios at 124 Featherston Street, was officially opened by the Right Hon. J. G. Coates, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

On September 17, 1925, the old station 4YA having been remodelled and

brought up to date, was opened up in the Dunedin Exhibition grounds under the call sign VLDN. At the close of the exhibition the station was dismantled and reopened on the original site under the old name, 4YA, on May 3, 1926.

All of the four stations have their respective quota of officers, who work under the direction of the station manager. The four station managers control their respective stations in accordance with the policy of the company, as expressed through the administration office.

EACH station broadcasts primarily for the benefit of the province in which it is located. The schedules of transmission are laid down by the company, and it is the duty of the station managers to see that they are strictly adhered to. In so far as the programmes are concerned, however, the stations are given a free hand to prepare these in accordance with local requirements, with a proviso that they must as far as practicable with local conditions, comply with the company's scheme of providing definite types of entertainment on different nights.

It will thus be seen that the Broadcasting Company makes every endeavour to arrange its programmes so that they will be of particular interest to the crystal users able to receive only the station in their neighbourhood, and at the same time varied to the extent that the listeners with valve sets have the choice of four different types of

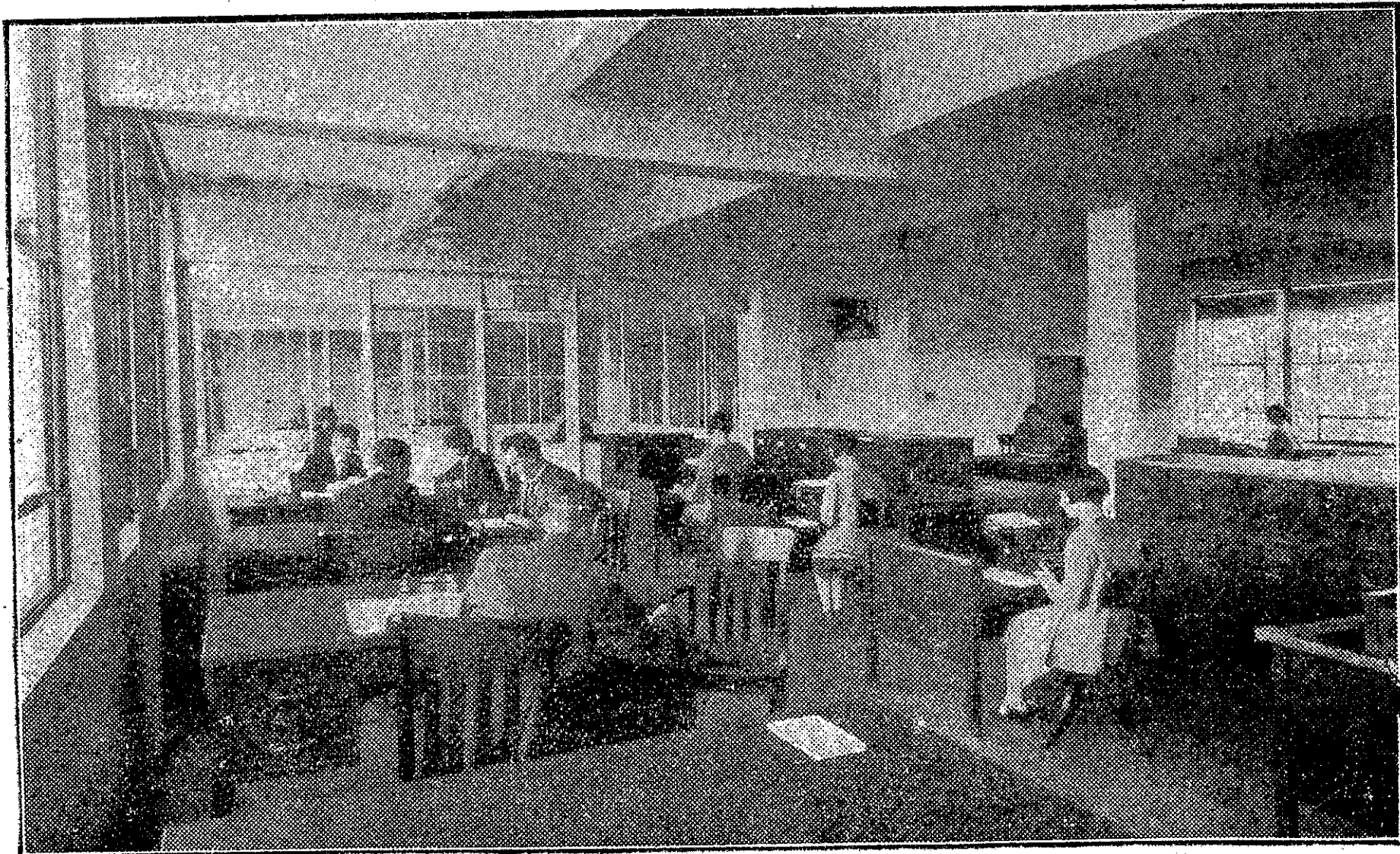
programmes when all stations are operating simultaneously.

Administration Offices.

IN order that station managers and officers can concentrate their greatest attention on the preparation and broadcasting of programmes, and obtain the maximum efficiency with economy, all stations are relieved as far as is practicable of general routine. This work is directed and undertaken by a competent staff at head office.

Apart from the organisation of its programmes, correspondence is by far the largest factor in the company's routine. If there is any one special agency through which a better mutual understanding is promoted between the listeners and the company, it is the enormous correspondence which the company conducts. Careful consideration is given to every letter received by the company, and it is the invariable practice to acknowledge every communication. The work involved is prodigious, and during the year an average of 3000 letters incoming and outgoing are handled every month.

All correspondence, with the exception of reports, is filed alphabetically and numerically, under names and subjects, in Y and E vertical filing cabinets. This equipment is steel and fireproof throughout, and makes provision not only for current filing, but for past work in transfer cabinets and future work in follow-up drawers. It is made up of units comprising foolscap



Interior of the Administrative Offices of the Radio Broadcasting Company, Christchurch.

—Photo., Webb.