

The New Zealand Radio Record

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THE RACING AND TROTTING BAN.

THE exchange of correspondence between the Broadcasting Company and the secretary of the Racing Conference, as published in the daily Press, illustrates to listeners the weakness of the reasons advanced by the two Conferences for their action. Concern for the community's morals in the alleged undue encouragement of illegal betting is substantially abandoned and the complaint is made that the Broadcasting Company will not pay for the results of the "costly entertainment provided by the clubs for the public." What a fall is this! The public never was misled by the reasons advanced. Not only were those reasons weak and invalid, but from the point of view of the racing authorities themselves their advancement was extremely bad policy, as inviting the community to question racing itself, if broadcasts were so inimical! As a correspondent elsewhere in this issue says, the Government might fittingly accept the gage of the Conferences and say, "Well, if you are so keen to reduce the volume of betting, we will help you by reducing the occasion for it in authorising fewer meetings throughout the year." Such an attitude would follow naturally from the reasons initially advanced.

THE suggestion that these same racing authorities desired to economise the time of the business community by depriving them of the opportunity of listening to race broadcasts has as little to recommend it. It was palpably weak and inadequate. In practically withdrawing these reasons and raising the excuse that payment was not made for the right to broadcast, the authorities are being more candid, although not necessarily more impressive to the public. In its various replies, the Broadcasting Company has dealt trenchantly and vigorously with the "reasons" advanced by the authorities and on merit of argument carries the day.

THE immediate occasion of the correspondence was the desire of the racing authorities to prevent the broadcasting of any results at all during the day. This, quite rightly, the Broadcasting Company refused. To our mind it was an extraordinary request for the racing authorities to prefer, for it was obviously unfair and restrictive in that it penalised one medium of communication to benefit another. The suggestion of the secretary of the Racing Conference that the Press were entitled to this favouritism because of special services rendered to racing is hardly a worthy one. The Press both serves

and is served by race news. It gives and it gets. It benefits largely by race advertising and greatly by the sale of sporting news.

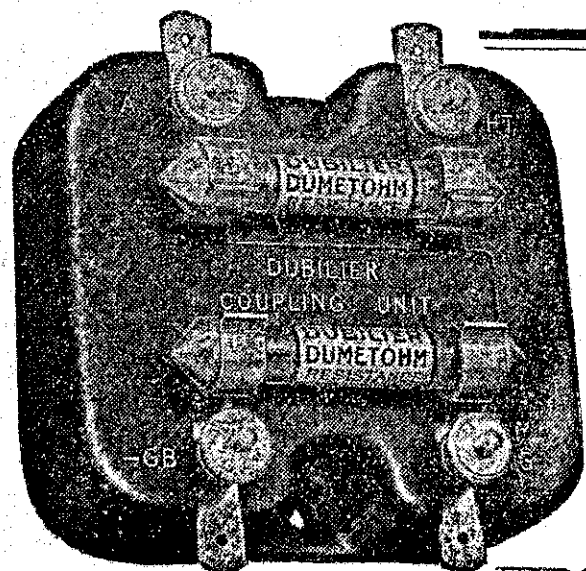
BROADCASTING as conducted in this Dominion is on a different basis. It is supported by the fees of listeners, and has no opportunity of specialised profit as has the Press. The racing authorities, in several references, have suggested that a rich private monopoly was profiteering from race news and meanly refusing to pay a cent for the service. The facts are far otherwise. How much of the listeners' money do the racing clubs want? The ban is a ban not so much of the company as of listeners. The gag is a gag imposed on the public. The loss is a loss inflicted on the public—and the public it is that is the chief supporter of racing. Look at it how one will, the attitude adopted by the authorities will never win public approval. Condemning monopoly, the Conferences are themselves flagrantly wielding monopolistic power, and that against their own chief patrons. Advocates of racing and trotting represent that they are conducted as contributories to the public interest and welfare. Why, therefore, should attempt be made to deprive the public of definite news of results at the earliest possible moment? The question reveals an extraordinary conception of the position of the public.

IN determining to give listeners the service to which they are entitled in respect of early news of matters of public moment, the Broadcasting Company has won the approval of all interested. The public likes fair play, and the favouritism sought to be perpetrated by the authorities was not fair. By temporary studios near the courses—accommodation that was readily proffered by many—the results of the Christchurch meetings have been given the public satisfactorily and expeditiously. Even while exercising its definite rights in this respect, however, it is to be noted that the Broadcasting Company has been mindful of the desires of the authorities, and, although it was quite feasible, has not so far given a running description of the races. This shows that the company is quite desirous of respecting the wishes of the authorities, but, in justice, it cannot deprive the public of legitimate news.

A MARKED contrast with the attitude of the racing authorities is offered by the testimony of the Otago Boxing Association as to the value of broadcasting. This association writes:—

"Thousands of listeners-in have taken advantage of the opportunity of listening to the special broadcasts from Dunedin, and many appreciative letters have been received by the O.B.A. in regard to the broadcasts. These broadcasts have not in any way affected the contest attendances, but, on the contrary, have not only created an increased interest in the sport throughout New Zealand, but has brought into the ranks of boxing-followers, many who had previously never taken any interest in the game."

IT is this broadening and attractive influence represented by an exciting and interesting running description of the actual races which the racing and trotting authorities are apparently deliberately sacrificing. In seeking to force into their coffers a few extra shillings are they not losing the pounds and pounds that are to be gained by luring to the course new devotees? Broadcasting reaches an audience larger far than any individual newspaper, and constant flouting of that audience is not likely to benefit racing.



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3YA ORCHESTRA

FORTNIGHTLY APPEAR-
ANCE

IN order to remove a small misconception, the Broadcasting Company desires to correct a statement in last week's issue of the "Radio Record" referring to Mr. Harold Beck's newly-formed orchestra. It was made to appear that this orchestra would appear at 3YA twice a week. This should have read twice a fortnight.

AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY OF WELLINGTON

A meeting of the Society will be held on the 21st August, 1928, at 8 p.m., in DOMINION FARMERS' INSTITUTE, FEATHERSTON STREET, WELLINGTON.

Interesting Lecture and Demonstration by Mr. W. M. Dawson, of Technical Department, Philips Lamps Co.—"The Relation of Various Characteristics of Receiving Valves."

Every Listener Made Welcome

W. H. TAYLOR,
Hon. Secretary.