

"MIKE" INVENTOR

JUBILEE OF INTRODUCTION

THE fiftieth anniversary of the birth of the microphone, the invention that made possible radio broadcasting, finds "Mike," as it is now familiarly called, at last given popular recognition as one of the really great inventions contributing to human happiness.

For more than forty years, while recognised by scientists as the essential fact in telephone transmission, the public at large knew nothing about the microphone and cared less. But to-day more than 20,000,000 radio "fans" know that it is the microphone that transmits to them their daily dozen from the air. For without "Mike" there is no broadcasting.

Over fifty years ago, on April 14, 1877, Emile Berliner, a young German immigrant, living in America, unable to speak pure English, filed his application for a patent on the microphone. His first crude instrument, constructed from a small toy drum, a steel dress button, and a needle, had actually talked. The microphone of to-day, as used both in the telephone transmitter and in radio broadcasting, is merely a refinement of the loose contact principle applied by Berliner with his toy drum, dress stud, and needle.

While the use of his microphone by telephone companies made Berliner rich—and multiplied conversation in these United States many fold—it is in its application to radio broadcasting that the inventor finds his greatest pride. Particularly is he proud of the fact that the microphone is making America a nation of music lovers.

"MUSIC," he declares, "is one of the finest of mental and spiritual foods. If the mind is pleasurably exercised by the harmonious vibrations of song, dance, and rhythm, stirring marches and inspiring overtures, freer circulation, better health, greater activity, and more smiles will be the result in our daily lives."

"That this is being brought about through the broadcasting of musical masterpieces by great artists, there can be no doubt. Men like Atwater Kent for instance, who have made it their aim to project good music into our homes, must be classed as benefactors. They are not merely giving pleasure to the millions who listen in; they are giving inspiration, morale, and a better attitude toward life generally."

Although Berliner also is the father of the disc talking machine, it is his oldest child "Mike" that is his chief pride. And Berliner, at 75, believes the "Mike" is just in his adolescence. The next century, he believes, will see "Mike's" usefulness extended into other fields now no more foreseen than radio broadcasting was half a century ago.



This is Peterkin, of 3YA, Christchurch, whose kindly personality has become a feature of the children's sessions within recent months. Peterkin differs from most of New Zealand's "uncles" in that the stories he reads to his nephews and nieces are all of his own composition. Peterkin is rapidly becoming known as a writer of thrilling stories for boys. His serials in "The Weekly Press" of Christchurch have won the approval of young readers, and his present plans are for the conquest of a wider field.

NEW YANKEE CIRCUIT

FROM time to time new receiving circuits are brought out by the American manufacturers. The latest circuit brought out by a Yankee concern may be technically described as a combination of a one-control tuned, valveless band-pass filter, coupled with a startling new development in an untuned, or rather self-tuning, five valve radio frequency amplifier, which in turn passes the energy to a heavy duty detector and conventional audio frequency amplifier.

Advantages claimed for the new circuit are that it delivers full and equal sensitivity and selectivity on the short as well as long waves; that it does not "chop off the side bands," or, in layman terms, distort the received sound by reason of its ultra sharp selectivity, and that the radically new departure in radio frequency amplification which it employs gives approximately double the yield from the equivalent high class set of the "tuned radio frequency" class.

"We can reduce 75 per cent. of the congestion in the 'scrap heap' section of the broadcasting channels below 300 metres, where 500 of the country's 700 broadcasters have been assigned at present," said the manufacturer's president.

The smaller models of the sets employing the new circuit use seven radio valves. De luxe models use nine. The circuit is obtainable in both "A.C." or alternating current type, as well as battery type sets.

Another advantage claimed for the circuit, viewing it from the manufacturers' standpoint, is that it has no conflict with the Alexanderson patent, a very valuable franchise for which many independent radio manufacturers necessarily pay heavy royalties to the Radio Corporation of America.

In addition, no "balancing" methods are employed and not one grid leak is used in the circuit.

NEPHEWS IN FIJI

WHOLE SCHOOL JOINS 2YA RADIO FAMILY

MR. D. SAUNDERS, headmaster of Provincial School, Eastern London, Fiji, writes the following interesting letter to 2YA:—

"You will be surprised to hear that you have 100 new nephews at a Fijian boys' boarding school in the backblocks of Fiji. From the proceeds of a recent bazaar we had here we have invested in an eight-valve super-hetrodyne set. The first night we listened in the first thing we picked up was 2YA children's hour, which the boys enjoyed thoroughly. The reception was quite good, although the station is inclined to fade away a little at times, but at no time were we unable to hear it. We picked up the riddle, 'We all make his praise,' and the boys send the following solution: 'William Shakespeare,' as the celebrated Englishman.

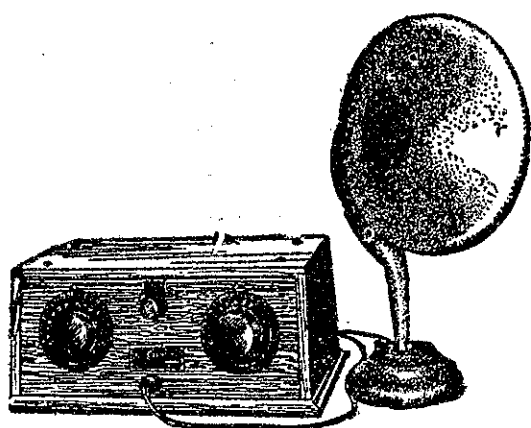
"Being a New Zealand teacher serving a term in Fiji, I am naturally interested in tuning-in New Zealand stations, and we hope that on next Monday week when we listen-in we shall hear a few words from you for our benefit. I have a little daughter, Eileen, who is a keen listener to bedtime stories, and I am sure she would be delighted to hear her name mentioned over the air. It would come as a great surprise to her. The Fijian boys, too, are hard to convince that the stories come from so far away. Perhaps if you had time to say a few words it would be most convincing to them."

ONE UNCLE TO ANOTHER

UNCLE JEFF and Aunt Gwen, of 2YA, have received the following letter:—"Dear Whoeveryouare,—I followed your session to-night. Your juvenile chorus was quite nice, and your own patter and stories came over very naturally. You are quite likely overburdened with compliments, so I do not presume you need or are in want of encouragement, but as your breezy session was just as I like it, I thought I would go the length of a penny stamp to pass on the compliments of a plain and unadorned.—Uncle Tom, 1YA."

ONE likes to record enterprise and ingenuity on the part of our own radio dealers. A Wellington man is manufacturing two-stage audio-frequency amplifiers, for use only with crystal sets, of a type which obtains its A, B, and C voltage supply from the household lighting mains. All one has to do is to plug into the lighting socket and the amplifier operates without any batteries at all. High-class audio transformers are embodied in the outfit, and with a crystal detector the tone is a veritable delight, and the volume ample. The outfit is being re-tailed at about £6.

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