

Notes and Comments

By "Switch"

KEEN rivalry exists in a certain Wellington suburb as to who shall have the tallest radio masts. Some real skyscrapers have been stuck up and the tallest is constructed of metal piping. It is 60ft. in height and well-stayed. The owner operates a crystal set, but it gives loudspeaker reception of 2YA, Wellington.

ONE listener in the suburb referred to essayed to erect a metal pipe mast on top of his shed. This mast was going to eclipse everything in that vicinity, but an assistant made a slip in steadying the mast, which went crashing to ground. A neighbour's roof received some damage, but the mast got the worst of it.

THE height of an aerial makes a noticeable difference in the volume of reception, and many a crystal set owner resident around Wellington would obtain infinitely better results if he would raise his aerial to 30 or 40 feet above fences, sheds, etc.

THE fact that so many crystal set owners attach so little importance to the height of their aerial is evident in every suburb of Wellington. The raising of an aerial just above the screening effect of a neighbouring tree or house will often give an increase of double or treble the volume of reception.

ACCORDING to the latest news from Melbourne, Station 3LO of that city, for the twelve months ended June 30 received a revenue, from its share of license fees, totalling £90,000. The declared profit for the year ended June 30, 1928, was about £7000. High fees have been paid for artists and lecturers. One noted aviator received £50 for a few minutes' talk before the microphone.

THE shareholders in 3LO Melbourne, which has a nominal capital of £100,000, are: Farmer and Co. (Sydney), 40,000 shares paid up to 17s.; J. C. Williamson and J. and N. Tait, 40,000 shares paid up to 17s.; the Melbourne "Herald" and "Weekly Times," Ltd., 15,000 shares; and Buckley and Nunn, Ltd., 5000 shares.

TALKING to an official in a position to know, the writer was told that some of the worst electrical interference experienced by broadcast listeners around Wellington was due to faulty bonds connecting tramrails to one another. The tramrails are bonded together to form an electrical circuit, and when one of the bonds becomes loose it permits a leakage, thus causing the roaring noise heard in neighbouring loudspeakers.

A VISIT to a household where there is a radio set and young children, will quickly convince anyone of the delight obtained from the children's session. Little tots sit around the loudspeaker listening with wrapt attention to the entertaining chats by the "uncle" and "aunt" officiating in front of the microphone. The writer lately witnessed such a scene. Three mites with alert ears and wondering expressions on their faces, absorbed all that issued from the loudspeaker with indescribable interest. It is rather a pity that broadcasting "uncles" and "aunts" cannot see their audiences.

REMARKABLE juvenile talent is displayed during the children's sessions from 2YA Wellington, and their efforts appear to stimulate the spirit of emulation among many of their little listeners. Instances are not infrequent in which youngsters have taken a fresh interest in their music or poetry after hearing other kiddies from 2YA.

A RATHER clever sketch was published some time back showing a horrified father entering a room to see his enterprising kiddie, hammer in hand, sitting on the floor examining the insides of a demolished radio set. In answer to the obvious exclamation of the bewildered parent the child explains that he has been looking inside the radio for the dear, kind uncle who tells the nice fairy tales every evening!

SOME soulless, carping cynic voiced his opinion in print some time back that the really harmless pretences by the broadcasting "uncles" and "aunts" tended to teach children to lie and foster an inclination towards deception. Who of us in our early childhood days did not obtain pleasure from the "land of make-believe"? Was not that old deception "Santa Claus" a joy and happiness to us? Many of us would like to live those days over again when fairies and gnomes were very real to us—just for one hour!

A LISTENER residing near the city tramlines states that each tram passing causes interference, and desires to know of the most effective cure. The most effective cure is to change one's residence. Interference due to the proximity of trams cannot be effectively overcome any other way. A listener friend states that he gets his best entertainment from the Australian stations when the trams have ceased running, as his aerial is only twenty-two yards from the overhead wire of a busy tram route.

WHEN undue crackling is heard from a receiving set the trouble is often found to be due to exhausted dry B batteries. A voltmeter test should tell you whether your B batteries have finished their span of usefulness. Once a 45-volt B battery has dropped to 35 volts it is ready for the dust-bin. They have lost their "pull," and cause noise like static.

THE British Broadcasting Corporation is forecasting the possibility of being able soon to broadcast a picture of any event four minutes after the station receives the finished picture. For many months the corpora-

tion has been experimenting with the reproduction of pictures by wireless, and it is considered that success with "still" pictures will be the forerunner of the establishment of regular radio movies. It is reported that several Australian experimenters are interested in the scheme, and its adoption in England will only precede its inauguration in Australia by a few months.

A MELBOURNE journal says: "Mainland listeners must have noticed the very much improved reception from 7ZL, Hobart." As a matter of fact, New Zealanders have noticed that reception from 7ZL, Hobart, went to the pack many months ago, and has not exhibited any signs of returning.

A N Australian writer says: "The signals from the Southern Cross were as strong and clear as ever when she went on her non-stop run to Perth recently, but the wavelength had been dropped from the 33.3 metres that was used on the trip from America to 32.5 metres, and was much more subject to interference from amateur stations. However, this time they were all on the look-out for the signals, and when they found them in their midst, kept well clear. The call sign KHAB, under which she worked on the trip out here, was augmented by the Australian call-sign VZGY, and she will probably always use this latter call now."

IF the best sites for the proposed relay stations in Australia are to be successfully selected a good deal of work is ahead of the Commonwealth experts. As an indication of the importance attached to the matter of determining the proper place to put a new station by the British Broadcasting Corporation it is noted that a special portable transmitter on a motor truck is used for the purpose of locating the proper position of a new regional station worthy of London. The portable transmitter was used for several weeks, engaged in making best transmissions from various points. At the same time special measuring receivers were used so as to note the effect of the test transmission in different localities. The complexity of the problem of putting up additional stations will thus be realised.

FOLLOWING American practice, the Coronation Hotel, Sydney, and the Carlton Hotel, Brisbane, have been equipped with elaborate radio installations, with speakers, in each bedroom, in the proprietor's private suite, the public saloon, lounge bar, and dining room. Reception is obtained on six-valve sets, and amplification is carried out on a push-pull system. In use, the installations render equally satisfactory speech or musical reception on one speaker or on all speakers simultaneously, without any increase or diminution of volume. Guests in each room of the hotels can hear the radio at any time by simply pressing a button at the bedside, as the set is always tuned in to one or other of the Australian broadcast stations. One of the chief uses of radio in hotels is to receive sporting results immediately an event is decided, and to provide music for the entertainment of guests.

A SPECIAL "old folks" programme has lately been broadcast in Mel-

bourne as a midday session. This idea is not at all a bad one, and even half an hour for old folks inserted in an evening session once every quarter would find wide appreciation. Many of the old-time songs and an occasional recitation of other days would entertain the younger generation as well as the old folks.

NUMEROUS listeners in New Zealand closely follow the wrestling bouts described by 3LO, Melbourne. Next Saturday the first of the elimination contests to decide who will be given the opportunity of wrestling Ted Thye for the much-disputed light-heavy-weight championship of the world will be described by Eric Welch, 3LO's special sporting commissioner. Eight wrestlers have been chosen to take part in the elimination series, in which a wrestler will have to be beaten only once to lose his chance of a title bout. The wrestlers chosen are Clarence Ecklund, "Ad" Santel, "George" Zarynoff, "Mike" Yokel, "Pinkie" Gardiner, Hugh Nicholls, Billy Meeske, and John Kilonis. When all but one of the eight have been eliminated, the remaining one will wrestle Thye for the championship somewhere about Cup time.

IN Australia a suggestion has been made for the holding of a competition for writers of short stories which are suitable for broadcasting. The sine qua non of a broadcast story should be that it does not exceed ten minutes in the reading of it.

FOR the Sunday afternoon concerts 3LO, Melbourne, not infrequently employs a gramophone, not an electric pick-up as is the general practice at broadcast stations.



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