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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1928.

The Southern Cross is on the Wing

Moderate Conditions Prevail for Historic Flight

AFTER a delay extending over nine days the giant three-engined Fokker, "Southern Cross" took off from Richmond aerodrome at 5.34 (New South Wales time) on Monday evening, and as we go to press is steadily winging its way to New Zealand where, at Sockburn, the most extensive and adequate preparations have been made for its landing. Had the flight taken place as planned during the week end we would have been able to give listeners a full account of the scenes of departure and arrival, as well as an indication of events throughout the flight.

To keep faith, however, with readers in distant parts who rely upon regular connection with mails to secure our programmes in advance, we must go to press with the flight in progress and the story of the part of radio still unfinished. Radio is, however, keeping all listeners in touch, and before these words are widely read, success will have been won—as is the general prayer and hope—or all will have been saddened by an unexpected failure. In the expectation of success we extend hearty greetings and congratulations to Captain Kingsford Smith and his gallant companions on blazing their aerial trail to these shores.



THE great flight is on. A week of heavy seasonal weather causing postponement after postponement necessarily somewhat dimmed the first flush of popular enthusiasm occasioned by announcement of the impending flight made after the hurried return of the "Southern Cross" from Perth. Incidentally those postponements in themselves were a tribute to the ability now presented to man by science to collate weather data from wide areas and reliably predict the ensuing atmospheric conditions. It is safe to say that this has been the most dramatic advertisement possible for modern weather service.

A change for the better was bound to come sooner or later, and under steadying influences, although with threat of a further depression approaching, the flight was begun on Monday.

RADIO immediately became the centre of interest. 2BL took up its task of an "all-flight" service and flashed to our shores details of the start. Reception proved dif-

ficult—impossible for effective relay, but within a few moments of departure 2YA was able to announce from 2BL that the aviators had taken off from Richmond at 26 minutes to six; that the four aviators had stood beside the machine enjoying a final smoke, as this enjoyment would be impossible en voyage; that after a 400-yard run the "Southern Cross" had taken off beautifully; that they carried two wreaths to drop in commemoration of the gallant Hood and Moncrieff; and that, finally, the "Southern Cross" had cleared Sydney at eleven minutes past seven, New Zealand time.

FROM all stations this news was given out, and listeners everywhere determined on their course of action—some to "see it through," and some to wait till midnight and rise early, refreshed for the more interesting and thrilling hours immediately preceding the actual arrival.

THE practice was adopted by 2YA of giving out official news immediately it was received and summarising it again in a review after each hour. This arrange-

ment proved quite satisfactory and enabled constant touch to be kept. The evening's progress was wrapped up in the few concise statements that at 8.30 communication was established with New South Wales; at 9.30 trouble was being experienced with the transmitting apparatus and the key was screwed down to give a constant note distinguishable from a group of American commercial stations. At 10.30 progress was being made at ninety knots an hour, and at 11.3 transmission was being made to Australia on 600 metres, but so faint as not to be heard in New Zealand.

THIS news was summarised at midnight, and there we must leave the flight. Taking a line through previous successes and the progress being made under the fairly satisfactory conditions ruling, success seems certain to crown the daring venture. Radio is keeping all in touch with developments, and we sincerely hope that before these words are read radio will have enabled all listeners and friends to picture the stirring scenes at Sockburn attendant on a successful arrival.