

Notes and Comments

By "Switch"

THE flight of the Southern Cross from Sydney to Christchurch did not provide the thrilling night most listeners expected. Terrific static and the break-down of the plane's radio equipment rather marred the big event. Then there was the Press Association copyright, which precluded the broadcasting of the messages from the plane. Still, if reception from Australia had not been murdered by static a considerable amount of stuff would have been available from the Australian stations, providing the radio equipment of the fliers had managed to keep going.

MANY hundreds of listeners sat up throughout the night with the hope that something interesting would turn up. The broadcast from 3YA, Christchurch, of the arrival of the Southern Cross must be placed on record as a great performance from every standpoint. The same can be said of the broadcast by 3YA of the returned soldiers' evening with the very gallant fliers as the guests. Many a home in Wellington rang with laughter that night at the humorous remarks and witty retorts.

WELL, if we did not get much reception from the actual flight from Australia, perhaps we will do better when the Southern Cross proceeds on the return trip. The short-wave station 2ME, Sydney, will no doubt be on the air to overcome the sunlight effect if the flight is carried out in the daytime, as proposed.

THERE was one feature of the Eucharistic Congress broadcasts from Sydney, which came in for much adverse criticism among listeners, and that was the ceaseless chatter of the announcer at the Royal Agricultural Show Grounds on the occasion of the "men's night," when some very beautiful singing was heard, in addition to a masterful address. The announcer and another man with a peculiar accent kept up a continuous babble, interfering with remarks by Father Herlihy, the conductor of the vast multitude of singers, and even butted in while the singing was in progress. The nature of these announcers' remarks were of "the greatest show on earth" type, and were frequently a vain repetition, especially regarding the unhappy experience of Father Herlihy, who had recently had an eye removed.

A SPEAKER at the recent meeting of the Amateur Radio Society of Wellington complained that listeners would pay as much as 70 or 80 pounds for a broadcast receiver, yet begrudged 15 or 20 pounds for a first-class short-wave receiver. A member replied that this could be readily understood when it was realised that in the evenings, the time most convenient for broadcast listeners, there was no entertainment available on the short waves, whereas a good multi-valve broadcast receiver could bring in about a dozen different stations on the loudspeaker. This was a fairly accurate statement of the position, and no doubt the almost entire

absence of short-wave entertainment in the evening is keeping back the popularity of short-wave work among broadcast listeners.

CONTENTIOUS matter is wisely debarred from being broadcast in New Zealand, for listeners would soon raise a mighty protest against imaginary favouritism. In England it was decided, a few months ago, to permit representatives of the three political parties to have their say before the microphone. The latest Home mail brings news that a conference between representatives of the British Broadcasting Corporation and the three political parties, with a view to arriving at an equitable agreement, had broken down. And so the lucky listeners have none!

THE writer is often asked whether the lead-in end of an aerial should be lower than the free end of an aerial if it is not exactly horizontal, and he has always insisted that the lead-in end should be the lower. The Melbourne "Listener In" says:—"Very few aerials are perfectly horizontal. Perhaps one end is only two or three feet higher than the other, or the aerial may have a decided slope to one end. It is important that in such cases the lead-in be taken from the lower end. At the same time it is unwise to take the lead-in from the end of the aerial furthest from the set should that happen to be the lower end. In the first place the lead-in will be unduly long, and, secondly, it will tend to cause the aerial to oscillate. The remedy is to arrange to have the lower end of the aerial nearest the house, if that be possible."

THE Commonwealth P. and T. Department has come in for a good deal of criticism for its failure to provide good telephone lines for broadcasting relay work. The Melbourne "Argus" says:—"Many cases could be cited in which telephone lines supplied by the department have not been above criticism. It has become quite clear that the time is at hand when broadcasting organisations must be regarded as important customers of the telephone department, and the sooner that arrangements are made to meet their special demands without annoying delays and failures, the sooner will programmes approach the same standard as those in Great Britain and the United States."

A Wellington company's enterprise has resulted in the production of an electrically operated gramophone of more than usual merit. The most interesting feature of the machine is the combination of a gramophone electrical mechanism and electro dynamic speaker. The gramophone is operated from the electric mains without the aid of batteries; is contained in the same

cabinet as the speaker, which is of the new dynamic cone type. The same cabinet contains the battery eliminating electrical equipment. The gramophone motor, electrical "pick up," which is of the magnetic type, and volume control device, are contained in a handsome console cabinet.

A speaker at the recent meeting of the Amateur Radio Society of Wellington, stressed the growing importance of Morse code. As a matter of fact, Morse will be gradually superseded by the development of the radio photogram service, which not only tends towards greater secrecy, but quicker dispatch. A letter is sent by radio-photography and reproduced in facsimile form at the receiving end without the use of Morse.

A report from Home states:—"The scope of wireless facilities existing between Great Britain and the United States has been extended considerably by the establishment of a regular service for the wireless transmission of photographs, drawings, signatures, business letters, and facsimiles of all kinds. The transmission of a photogram five inches long by three inches deep, from London to New York, costs about £10. For repetition beyond New York an additional charge of about £9 for every picture five inches by seven inches must be paid. It is understood that the wireless companies concerned expect a steady development of the photogram traffic, and when this occurs, a substantial reduction in rates is likely."

FOR the loud speaker to be able to give pure reproduction, it must be capable of responding equally to all frequencies within the limits of the human ear, that is to say, from about 30 per second up to 10,000 per second. To attain this end, the cone speaker has been designed and developed; but if low bass notes are to be heard, the cone must be large. It is useless to expect to hear bass notes from a small cone. This does not apply to the electro-dynamic loudspeaker, in which depth of tone is reproduced by the amplitude of the vibrations and the slowness of the vibrations obtainable through the moving coil principle.

MISS Marjorie Allomes, who has made herself widely known as a singer at IYA, Auckland, has been on a visit to Sydney, and has sung at the studio of 2BL.

BROADCASTING, instead of mere Morse transmission is now capturing the fancy of Melbourne amateur transmitters. An experimental broadcasting competition on ultra short waves has been organised among Melbourne amateur transmitters. The committee appointed to carry out the technical judging has completed the main details of the job and about 17 applications have been received from stations who intend taking part. These stations may be heard testing on short waves and adjusting their apparatus almost any evening. All stations are keen on the work, and the judges will have a by no means easy job to decide the final seven, let alone the winning station.

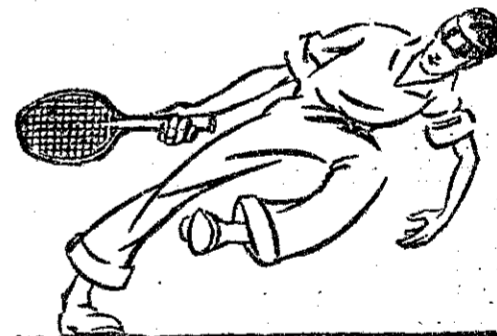
NOW that Mr. H. P. Brown, Director of Australian Posts and Telegraphs, has returned from abroad, it is probable that the new Commonwealth Government wireless committee, inaugurated during his absence, will meet immediately to decide on the future of broadcasting in Australia. It is not the intention of the Government to cancel the leases outright, but to effect certain working adjustments which should improve broadcasting generally.

AT a recent examination in England a public school girl, as a subject of an essay on prominent persons, was requested to state whom she would like to meet. She chose three celebrities in the following order: the 2LO (London) announcer, the Prince of Wales, and Marconi.

AN inverted "L" aerial gives better strength when its free end points away from the station from which maximum signal strength is desired. This means that the lead-in would come from the end of the aerial nearest to the objective station. If possible to use a high aerial, such will be found better than a low one with directional qualities.

THE recent cabled report from England that photographs were about to be broadcast so that listeners with inexpensive additions to their ordinary sets could see the photos, does not imply that the broadcasting of actual moving scenes is any nearer. The Baird system claims to reproduce moving scenes such as a person speaking, smiling, performing card tricks or juggling. Experts are far from convinced of any success of the Baird system.

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