

The Model Programme.

THE "Radio Record" does not profess to be a humorous paper, but the "Mail-bag" does at times provoke much hilarity, especially when it comes to programme matters! The letter of J.K. (Trentham) in your issue of the 7th inst. has given me much more amusement than last week's "Punch"! Let us consider his claims first and then his "model" programme. Thirty years ago he was a member of an orchestra—his musical education apparently stopped when he left—and therefore, presto! he must be able to appreciate good music! Could anything be more certain, definite, or more easily proved! J.K.'s musical taste is probably of equal standard with his humour. We can therefore leave to the discrimination of your readers his delicate remark concerning the "barrow" tone with a case of the studio at 2YA. What humour! The artist in question has a good voice, sings good songs, evidently too good for J.K. of Trentham, on his own admission. Let me briefly consider the "model programme." J.K. has succeeded in choosing some of the most hackneyed, murdered and overworked items in the whole range of music, and probably nearly exhausted the extent of his musical repertoire of titles. "William Tell Overture"—murdered nightly by every third-rate and fourth-rate village orchestra since it was composed. There are others. Violin solo—Mendelssohn's "Spring Song." Not intended as a violin solo at all but perpetrated by young violinists as a "show piece" after they have been learning about three months. J.K. might not be aware that Mendelssohn wrote many more "songs without words" besides the "Spring Song."

Our Mail Bag

Will correspondents please practice brevity, as heavy demands are now made on space. All letters must be signed and address given as proof of genuineness; noms de plume for publication are permitted. Address correspondence Editor, "Radio Record," P.O. Box 1032, Wellington.

'Cello solo—The sloppy "Broken Melody," also perpetrated by young beginners on the piano and the violin! Or "Barcarolle" ("Tales of Hoffman"). How poor Offenbach must squirm in his grave as he hears this pretty melody variously rendered as a soprano and contralto duet, piano solo, solo with instrumental obbligato, 'cello solo, full orchestra, and every other possible combination. Talk about overwork—the poor melody has been mauled and maltreated to such an extent that it has at least earned a rest. I wonder that J.K. omitted the "Prisoner's Song."

Xylophone solo—"Les Clotches de Corneville"—otherwise "Les Cloches de Corneville"—an ancient fourth-rate opera, with even very little decent melody.

Piano solo—"Militaire Marche." Presumably Schubert's "Marche Militaire" is intended. Not a piano solo at all!

Orchestra (repeat item or encore)—Possibly the dear old "Barcarolle" over again in another form. (As I write this it is being massacred as a flute solo in the children's session from 1YA!!)

Orchestra—"Blue Danube Waltz." Hammered out with one finger by every budding infant piano prodigy in every suburban street in the world. The smug satisfaction with which J.K. recognises good music appears to consist solely in a short string of titles familiar to everyone who has hammered, blown or bowed a note of music during the last 35 years! J.K.'s friends may take heart of grace. They are probably better programme directors than he—they could not conceivably be worse. So much space was taken with J.K.'s fatuous model programme that I trust room may be found for this attempt to check its pernicious influence.—B.P.S. (Orewa).

In Radio Land.

I FEEL that I ought to let you know how we appreciate the programmes broadcasted by New Zealand stations, capped off by excellent reception of Kingsford Smith's Tasman flight. I think J. K. Trentham, with his fourteen-item programme, and "Homo" with his King's English, both growlers, and the racing officials, could be done without in radioland.—"Tenderfoot" (Pahiatua).

An Appreciation.

I FEEL I must express our appreciation of the efforts of the R.B.C. during the flight of the Southern Cross across the Tasman. Throughout the night we listened-in, and waited, until the final triumphal landing in Christchurch at 9.23. We cannot praise the announcers enough for the way they handled the situation throughout, putting on bright records and keeping us well posted as to the progress of the Southern Cross. To hear the roaring of the 'plane through the night made it all seem very real indeed to us, and we would not have missed this memorable event for anything. Just as we listened in to the Moncrieff-Hood broadcast, so we stood by again waiting and hoping

for the best, and rejoiced to know this latter flight ended successfully. While I am writing I should like to express my indignation at some of the objectionable letters sent in as regards our announcers. We think they are all just splendid, each different, yet each doing his very best at all times. The best cure for those who complain would be to put them before "Mike" for an hour, and then let them stand back and receive the criticism hurled at themselves likewise. It is quite impossible to please everyone, evidently. We enjoy every item that is broadcast, and I often think it is only people like us who live "out back," who really do know how to appreciate wireless. It means so much to us, that it has almost become a necessity, and though we are living in a wonderful age, we consider wireless the most wonderful invention of all, for it brings to our homes all that which we are denied through living in the country.—Mrs. J. McKenzie (Bay of Plenty).

Rebroadcasting.

CONCERNING the subject of howling much has been said, written, and broadcast on this most annoying type of interference, but why do not the company's engineers look closer at home, presumably they have the best apparatus offering. The recent short-wave broadcasts both from America and Australia were badly distorted at times, and it was plain to any short-wave listener of any experience at all that a great deal of the same was caused by the receiving station, when intense fading was experienced a finer adjustment was almost always attempted with disastrous results. Again on Saturday evening 2ZL and 1YA were rebroadcast; 1YA direct was crystal clear, but from 2YA oscillation was very much in evidence. A check-up over the 'phone with a city resident proved results there to be identical. I suggest that the interference was very close to the receiving station in both cases. On Saturday night I listened to 1YA via 2YA and 3YA. My brother asked what would be the result if Auckland should tune in and rebroadcast 2YA at the same time without any previous announcement. I suggest that the ensuing silence would be a terrible howl. That's Irish.—"Constructive" (Lower Hutt).

Concerning 2YA.

I WOULD like all listeners-in who have complained about the reception from 2YA to be present with me at the moment, 7.30 p.m., September 13. I am using one stage of radio detector, four stages of audio, and an aerial nine feet long, and am getting good loud-speaker strength. I am quite convinced in my own mind that 2YA is in every way perfect. The only explanation I can personally give for the poor reception I receive is that it is due to outside interference. At times I require three stages of radio and a good aerial of 150ft. to receive signals so weak that I cannot distinguish speech from music. At present modulation is absolutely perfect, and I can distinctly

hear the announcer's intake of breath as he is speaking about the flight of Flight-Commander Kingsford Smith from Christchurch to Wellington. 3YA can never under the best conditions approach 2YA as I am receiving it at present, but at 8 p.m. no doubt I will have all my eight valves in commission and will be "standing on the gas."—Herbert Ziele (Napier).

Stepping the Doll Dance.

LAST Saturday night 2YA listeners were treated to the usual combination of good music and merriment for which the Saturday night concerts are becoming rapidly famous. One item, however, marred an otherwise perfect programme—the proverbial fly in the ointment, so to speak. Who the studio pianola expert is, I know not, but whoever was responsible for the manipulation of "The Doll Dance," should have been tarred and feathered. If the artist in question were made to dance in time to his own music, it would probably bring home to him much more forcibly than by mere words the speed at which he rendered the item in question. One artist, in his items, mentioned four-wheel brakes in connection with aeroplanes—it would seem that the same would not go amiss on player pianos. These instruments, when played properly, are capable of rendering some excellent numbers, but in the hands of a Hercules whose main object seems to be speed and noise, they become no more than a mere band-box of musical jargon and cacophony. I have no wish to discourage any budding young piano player artist, but—let's whisper in his pink young ear—"Whoa-a-a—Dobbin!"—A.W.L. (Khandallah).

Mushiness Overcome.

I SHOULD like to know if any short-wave "fans" heard an American station on 26 metres on Saturday evening (15th inst.). I tuned him in about 6 p.m. when he was giving piano-forte selections and coming over R3-4. Rapid fading spoilt intelligibility to a great extent. I heard him announce that it was a test transmission and the call-sign sounded like 2XAW, but I understand this station operates on 15 metres. I am working a three-valve receiver (detector and two audio), and, although it is only about two months since I built it, I have a respectable "log" of 87 telephony stations, 44 of which are on the broadcast band. While I am on the job, I should like to mention what may prove an interesting point. In the afternoons 2YA comes through at good speaker strength and as clear as a bell, running the set at about "half-power." In the evenings I found that by using a low aerial and shortening it until 2YA was reduced to "daylight strength," the quality of the reception from 2YA left nothing to be desired. I was very gratified at this result as 2YA on my main aerial is almost out of the question for his "mush" and "roar." For those who may care to try this idea, the following are the dimensions of my aerials:—

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