

# Judging the Popular Taste



FOR days after the big competition was put on the air, hundreds of coupons poured in by every mail into the office of the Broadcasting Company, at Christchurch. Solid bundles of envelopes every mail packed P.O. Box 1079. It was a splendid response, and greatly exceeded all anticipations. In a recent Mystery Night competition, held at 1YA, when a prize of the same value was offered, the entries were less than 300. On this occasion, they totalled 3015 valid coupons, with others which arrived after the closing time.

The big radio competition, for which the prize is a £50 Columbia Grafonola, donated by the New Zealand Distributors of Columbia Products, closed on Wednesday, November 31. The response exceeded anticipations. No less than 3015 valid coupons were returned. The work of calculating the New Zealand average from the marks given to each particular item was done by the Burroughs Adding Machines. The New Zealand order of popularity thus derived is published below.

It would appear that no competitor has the full order correctly stated, and this fact resulted in much careful checking being required to ascertain who was the nearest to the correct order.

The competition was the essence of fairness, and the winner is deserving of the heartiest congratulations. The competition certainly aroused a very great deal of interest, and the answers sent in provide an illuminating analysis.

Other instances of a similar nature could be cited.

## Whose Taste?

OTHERS had difficulty in filling in the coupon, on the ground that they had to choose between their own

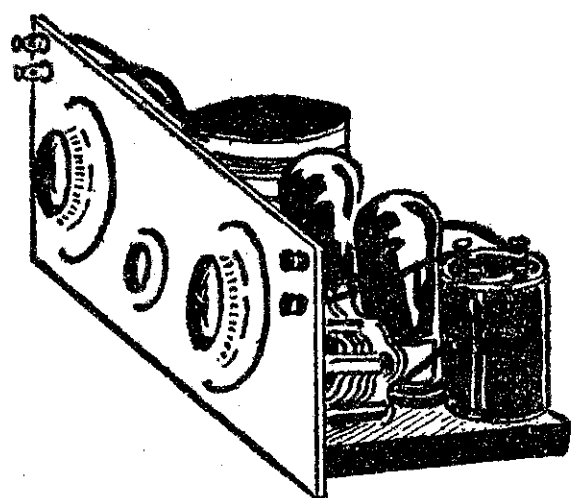
ing the competition, and had concluded that the majority of listeners would give their own preferences, being convinced that such preferences were not only their own but the general public's. However, it was evident, too, that if listeners did state what they considered was the order of public popularity, this was what the competition aimed at obtaining. It is possible, however, that in future competitions some means will be found for overcoming the quandary in which these special listeners found themselves, and that they will have the opportunity of expressing their own preferences as well as their opinion as to what the public wants.

## A Comparative Tally.

A CAREFUL tally and check were kept on all coupons as they came in. On November 22 and 23 there was a comparatively poor response, the coupons received being 311 and 421 respectively. But it was soon quite evident that competitors were not hurriedly sending in their replies. Monday morning's mail saw the correspondence clerk laden down with nearly 600 coupons, as well as the ordinary heavy mail. Tuesday brought the week-end entries, the result of some quiet consideration, over 800. The closing date saw a still heavier mail—875. There were more even after that, but they were too late.

It was at 2YA that the programme was first broadcast, and every day afterwards saw consistently heavy polling. The coupons received daily from 2YA being: 291, 211, 236, 403, 409. These figures give rise to the conjecture as to how many more coupons would have been received had the competition been open a few days longer. It is very probable that all the stations would have sent in many more, for it has to be remembered that the Auckland competitors, who are furthest away, had one day less, and the Christchurch listeners had two days less than Wellington in which to send in their answers.

The number of coupons received and allocated to the various stations were:



## 2-Valve set for 39/6

Or complete with Valves, Batteries and Amplion Dragonfly Loudspeaker.

**£5-15-0**

The circuit employs the now well-known and justly-popular N.Z.R. Circuit and will give good loudspeaker reception from local station, and head-phone reception of Australian Stations. The same circuit built as a

## 3-Valve Set for 58/-

Or complete with Valves, Batteries and Amplion Dragonfly Loudspeaker and Headphones.

**£7-19-6**

Other astounding values up to Six-valve Sets for £12 contained in special list—Send for a copy.

Terms if desired. Satisfaction guaranteed.  
MAIL COUPON NOW.

**Messrs. ABEL, SMEETON LTD.,**  
Wholesale and Retail Merchants,  
27-29 Customs Street E.,  
AUCKLAND.

Sirs,—Please send me particulars of the Special Values you are offering in Radio Sets and Accessories.

Name .....

Address .....



Sorting the Big Mail in the Popularity Contest

While the entries are such, a very satisfactory total, they do not represent the total interest which was taken in the competition. Many letters received speak of the competition, but do not enclose a coupon, yet the writers are keenly anxious to know what the result of the voting is. Although there was a valuable prize to be won, and there was no entrance fee, many listeners, though very interested, did not bother to fill in coupons.

A FEW listeners found difficulty in filling in the coupons correctly. Some of the misconceptions were excusable, and wherever possible their coupons were counted, but in some instances it was impossible to know what the entrants meant, or on what principle they worked in allotting the marks, and stating the order of popularity. The filling-in of the coupon was really very simple, if the instructions were followed. All that had to be done was to fill in opposite each item the number of marks awarded, and then to state in the column on the right-hand side the number of the items, in their order of preference, commencing at the top. Yet, some competitors had their own way of interpreting the instructions. In one instance, a husband and wife sent in coupons. Each had a different opinion as to the relative merits of the items—and each had a different way of filling in the coupon. In this case, the wife was correct.

preference and what they thought the public would like. One correspondent questioned whether, for this reason, the aim of the competition was not defeated, as entrants would state the popular taste rather than their own fancy. The company had considered this aspect before launch-



Working on the Burroughs machine to find the order of popularity