

The New Zealand Radio Record

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P.O. Box 1032, WELLINGTON.

WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1928.

GENERAL satisfaction will be felt amongst all interested in the general advance of radio, at the information now officially available, that settlement has been reached by the Government in respect of the claims for patent royalties presented by Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia), Limited. At the moment of writing, a comparatively bare official statement only is available. This states that agreement was reached in October last, and payment totalling £10,852 made on November 10. The agreement provides that an annual payment of 3s. per head be made to the Company, in respect of each licensed listener, and in recognition of this payment the Government is free to make use of the Company's patents for broadcasting purposes. Further, the right apparently has been granted to the Post and Telegraph Department to grant licenses to dealers to deal in patents held by the Amalgamated Wireless Company without risk of an action for damages.

FROM the listeners' point of view, it is satisfactory to note that it is not intended that the annual license fee of 30s. paid by listeners should be increased. This, to our mind, is a very commendable decision, in that it is undesirable to impose any additional cost which would be likely to hinder the extension of radio.

WHILE there are amongst the traders a number who held that the validity of the patent claims of the Australian Company were open to question and who were even prepared to back up their view by the provision of a substantial fighting fund, the general body of opinion will, we think, agree that if extensive litigation was avoidable, it should be avoided. Doubtless, it was considerations of this nature together with recognition of both the legal and perhaps the moral claim of the Company to payment for the use of its patents, that induced the Government to effect the agreement. An important outcome of the arrangement has yet to eventuate, namely, a conference between the Department and the associated radio dealers. Keen interest will attach to this conference on the part of the trade pending determination of the amount, if any, of the retrospective payment that the trade is to be asked to bear. It may be, of course, that no such sacrifice will be asked of the trade, but that provision may be made through the license to deal in radio goods, which the Department now has power to impose, for recouping the initial outlay made in settlement of the retrospective claims. That, perhaps, would be a very desirable consummation in the circumstances as it would free the trade from a sum which would be in the nature of a penalty, and permit of future payments being based upon turnover.

SO far as the Broadcasting Company is concerned, it would not appear to be affected in the slightest by the arrangement. At the time that the Company was formed, it will be remembered that the Government as a condition of the arrangement entered into, assumed all liability for royalty claims. The Company was therefore

relieved of all legal and moral obligations in respect to these claims because of the bargain then struck. In the comparatively limited knowledge now available to us, we think it will be agreed generally that for the future good of radio, the agreement reached is wholly beneficial. By it, progress may be made with the assurance that there is no cloud hanging overhead.

Judging the Popular Taste

Winner of the £50 Columbia Grafonola

THE winner of the £50 Columbia Grafonola, donated by the N.Z. Distributors of Columbia Products as the prize in the recent radio competition conducted by the Broadcasting Company was:—

MR. JAMES C. PASCELL, Cromwell, Central Otago.

It was after a lengthy sorting-out process that the judges arrived at their decision. It was necessary to take into account not only the actual number of items that competitors had placed correctly, but also the number which had been transposed and which were therefore very near the correct order. In several instances the averages of the items were very close, the difference being only a decimal point, and in the sorting-out of the coupons, transpositions of this nature were taken into account. Eventually, by a process of elimination, only Mr. Pascell's coupon was left.

The winning coupon was taken from the "Radio Record," and the station listened to was 4YA. It is interesting to note that the winner is one of the 216 who heard the competition from 4YA, and that he is one of the 80 who forwarded in "Radio Record" coupons from Otago.

New Plymouth to Have Broadcasting Station

Broadcasting Company Co-operating with Radio Society

A SCHEME for putting New Plymouth "on the air" has been "in the air" for some time, and it seems likely now that another two or three months will see the scheme matured. The proposal advanced considerably last week, when Mr. J. Ball, editor-announcer, and Mr. J. M. Bingham, the company's chief engineer, visited New Plymouth and went further into the question.

AS is well known, reception of 2YA is somewhat spoiled in New Plymouth owing to the screening effect of Mt. Egmont. A scheme for circumventing the mountain obstacle has therefore been hatching in New Plymouth, and overtures were some time ago made by the Radio Society for the use of some of the Company's old plant with which to make a small re-broadcasting station. The suggestion appealed to the Company, which considers that it can adapt some of the old plant which was discarded when the new stations at 1YA and 2YA were erected. The proposed station will have a power of 50 watts, which will be ample to ensure good reception in the town of New Plymouth.

THE studio and transmitting station will be in the heart of the town—the studio is to be in the music warehouse of Messrs. H. Collier and Company—but the receiving station, which will be used for the purpose of re-broadcasting 2YA will be on a flank of Mt. Egmont. The exact location will depend on the quality of reception and whether a good relay line to the studio can be arranged.

THE New Plymouth station will not, of course, be used solely for re-broadcasts. The studio will be adequately fitted up with the necessary microphones, and there is little doubt that the Radio Society will take full advantage of New Plymouth talent for the purpose of providing local programmes.

DURING the recent conference with the company's representatives, the Radio Society's speakers said the intention was that several of their members should qualify for an operator's certificate and take turns in controlling the station.

THE complete scheme has not yet been worked out in detail, but the indications are that in two or three months' time New Plymouth will be able to boast a station of its own, and crystal set users in that town will be able to hear the cream of the programmes sent out by the other New Zealand stations controlled by the Broadcasting Company.