

## Passing of the Old Year

(Continued from front page.)

### Listeners' Congratulations.

THE Christmas and New Year season has brought shoals of appreciative messages to the broadcasting stations. Listeners have written in to thank the Broadcasting Company for the service it has given throughout the year, and those to whom the season's greetings have been extended have included uncles and aunts, announcers, programme organisers, performers, the mechanical staff—in fact, everyone who has had a share in presenting the broadcast entertainments.

These tributes have been conveyed in many forms—some by means of cards, some by presents (mainly to the uncles and aunts), some people have written at considerable length and others have thought that brevity best expressed their sentiments. Such a one wrote this: "I wish to thank the Broadcasting Company for many hours of delightful entertainment."

Newspaper radio editors have taken the opportunity of tendering their felicitations and have not been tardy with their congratulations. Such a one is "Aerial" of the Christchurch "Star," who thus refers to broadcasting affairs generally:—

THE past year has seen further gratifying progress both in the quality of the programmes broadcast by the YA stations and in the opportunities seized by the N.Z.B.C. to put interesting relays of important sporting and other events on the air. The company has neglected no function of any interest that would appeal to listeners and has shown considerable enterprise in rebroadcasting (when conditions permitted) several foreign short-wave stations.

"On the whole, the evening concert sessions showed a commendable improvement on the preceding year and, from that fact and other indications of the company's initiative, the prospects of still further improvement are very encouraging.

### Racing Broadcasts.

IT is a matter of considerable regret to many listeners that the past year has been marred by the antagonistic attitude to broadcasting taken up by the racing authorities. They have been foolish in the extreme

in placing a ban on the broadcasting of relayed descriptions of the races. These, when they were made, proved perhaps as popular a feature of broadcasting as any other activity of the YA stations and did more than any other agent to break down considerably the really large body of popular opinion that horse racing is a pastime beloved by the depraved and patronised by folk the less said about whom the better.

"In 'Aerial's' own experience more than one group of listeners (who, before racing by radio was introduced, would have considered they were going straight to the devil if they had gone to the races) were amongst the most indignant when the company was refused the families for relaying race descriptions.

### Relays.

"THERE are folk in New Zealand, as was the case in every other country when wireless first captured the public, who are frightened that a relayed broadcast of their performances, or what not, will have the result of keeping people away from the theatre, hall, course, etc., thus causing financial loss. That these relays in other countries have had exactly the opposite result—where, that is, the performance was worth while—has been proved over and over again.

### The New Year.

"WHAT of the New Year? Listeners generally, from what 'Aerial' has been able to gather, are looking forward to further programme improvements, and more extensive rebroadcasts of overseas stations than for an extension of hours by the YA stations, except that there appears to be a growing desire that these stations should shut out their silent nights.

"It may be taken as a truism that 'the older the listener, the more attention he devotes to his local station'; and by 'older' is meant length of experience as a listener, not age in years. The demand to-day—as a year ago—is for 'brighter' programmes. The majority of listeners want music of the light, popular order—not grand opera, nor classical stuff—and what they want they are entitled to receive, for, after all, he who pays should call the tune."

## Closing Year's Review

### Great Progress in Australian Broadcasting

THE year 1928 may fairly be looked upon as perhaps the most important in the history of broadcasting since its inception in Australia. Particularly to this State does the fact apply, as the year has been one of outstanding progress so far as New South Wales is concerned.

A glance at the figures supplied by the Postmaster-General's Department shows that the year 1928 opened with, in round figures, 72,000 licenses in force in this State, and on present appearances the year will close with a total approximating 92,000 registrations. The gain of 20,000 set owners is the best answer to any who have doubted the policy which has guided the efforts of those controlling the broadcasting services in New South Wales.

A further interesting fact worthy of note is that the total increase in licenses in New South Wales is more than two to one of that for the rest of Australia for the year just closing. This proves beyond doubt that broadcasting increased in popularity, and that the policy formulated by the directors of the New South Wales Broadcasting Company, Limited, has been based upon broad grounds, acceptable to the mass of listeners.

A retrospective view of some of the main features of the past year brings into prominence the broadcasting of Grand Opera, the description of the arrival of Hinkler and the "Southern Cross," the transmissions in connection with the Eucharistic Congress, the English footballers, the tour of the English cricketers, the frequent rebroadcasts of many overseas stations, the Federal elections, and the best that could be given in the world of local sport.

### Daily Programmes.

SO far as the daily programmes are concerned, an effort has been made to secure the best available talent for every section of broadcasting. The

question of cost has not been allowed to interfere. The policy has been with the increase of licenses to make available an increased number of features, and this has been particularly noticeable in the instrumental engagements entered into by the Company during the year. In the main, the programmes presented must have been acceptable, otherwise the remarkable increase in license figures in New South Wales would not have been maintained.

Broadcasting which calls for a programme on every day in the week right throughout the year presents enormous difficulties even in cities with populations as large as London, New York, Paris, and Berlin. This becomes greatly aggravated when the obligation is to find programmes for two stations in cities so far removed from the world's great centres of music. That in face of these difficulties, radio has made so much progress throughout Australia, is largely due to the policy of those controlling the "A" class stations, in catering so fully for listeners on the utilization side of broadcasting.

The directors of the New South Wales Broadcasting Company, Limited, endeavoured during the latter months of the year to tap a fresh well in local broadcasting talent. To this end a Radio Eisteddfod was carried out, in which nearly 1500 individual entries were received. The result of this effort has been to considerably increase the range of choice in the vocal and instrumental direction, and to a lesser degree the light and more popular side of comedy, revue, and humorous presentation.

Throughout the year the mechanical and transmission side of broadcasting has retained the high standard to which it had previously been brought. Every effort has been made to instal the very latest improvements and considerable advancement has been made in research in regard to overseas broadcasting.

### 2FC's Fifth Birthday

STATION 2FC celebrated its fifth birthday on December 5, and invited listeners to send in some candid criticism concerning the best and the worst feature that appeared in the station's programmes. A big response was the outcome, and an analysis of the replies has been made with the following result:—

32 people thought that sopranos were the worst feature on the station, whereas 40 considered the announcing was the best feature. Those in favour of church services exceeded those against by 13; 33 people thought the classical programmes were the best, whereas, on the other hand, 56 thought the dance items came top; 29 people did not like pianoforte solos, whereas 26 thought the children's session was a paramount feature—and so on, through the various items, with the pendulum swinging backwards and forwards, showing vividly how difficult various tastes are to cater for.

THE prize of £1 ls. to the listener who sent in the most interesting letter was awarded by Mr. J. Laugier, Valencia, via Boisdale, Victoria, who gave the following as 2FC's best feature

Continuity of service with a minimum of waste time. Absence of fading. (2FC is the only station which can be received all the time, although other stations of equal power are closer.)

Absence of thinly-veiled advertisements, trivial propaganda, and irrelevant announcements.

Strict adherence to programmes as announced.

Your announcers speak with clarity and modulation without, on one hand, indulging in that imitation superiority of tone, fraught with artificiality so noticeable on some stations. As for criticism, when you warrant it, you will certainly have another epistle from me."

### Right Royally Entertained

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