

"B" Class Stations**Mr. Owen Writes Six Years of Progress****An Application Made****Visits Broadcast Stations The B.B.C. in Retrospect**

FOLLOWING on a conference of the radio trade which was held in Wellington to discuss the question of arrangements effected by the Department with Amalgamated Wireless (Aus.) Ltd. in connection with patent rights, discussion occurred on a proposal to establish a company to operate the question of B grade stations in New Zealand. The prime mover in the campaign is Mr. L. B. Strachan, Christchurch, Director of Station 3ZC. In last week's issue Mr. Strachan discussed in general terms the principle of B class stations being allowed to operate a service and derive revenue from the sale of publicity over the air. Application was made to the Department by a deputation of radio dealers for permission to do this. If this is granted it is intended to form a company with extensive capital, to provide a continuous programme from early morning until midnight from four stations operating throughout the Dominion.

In an explanation of the proposal given to the daily Press Mr. Strachan states that it was not intended that the B stations would conflict in any way with the service provided by the Broadcasting Company in New Zealand, for the company would be quite prepared to utilise the present silent hours and keep off the air during the hours that the YA stations are broadcasting. They had a definite offer from one of the big Australian stations to join up with them in the matter, and if this were brought about it would mean that in all probability Australian artists would be sent to the Dominion to broadcast from the B grade stations.

The Department now has the question under consideration.

Correspondent Replies to Criticisms.

I WISH to thank you for the space given my last letter and your reply to same, and would ask for a little space to reply to Mr. N. Winstanley's letter, which appeared in your last issue. I am afraid your correspondent merely glanced through my letter, as he has quite missed my point, that is, that I was referring to conditions as they exist locally. If he could bring his set to this district and tune in 2YA at night between eight and ten o'clock, he would be in for quite a surprise. In fact I think the moving coil speaker which he is so proud of, would just keep on moving until it arrived home in Picton. He further criticises my receiver in its inability to receive Australian stations. Here again he passes judgment on something he obviously knows nothing about. He grows quite indignant at the idea of a portion of the license fees being spent on a station from which he will derive no benefit. He does not seem to realise that we have been helping to pay for his entertainment all along, and going wanting ourselves. But we are not asking for any of Mr Winstanley's money; all we ask is that a portion of our own license fees be returned to us in the way of a subsidy towards a B station in this district or, failing that, that the company proceed immediately with the erection of a relay station.

WRITING from London to a Wellington friend, Mr. J. H. Owen, ex-president of the Wellington Radio Society, says:—"With a letter of introduction from Capt. P. P. Eckersley, the Chief Engineer of the B.B.C. to the Engineer in Charge of the Daventry station, I left this morning by train from Euston to Northampton. A car was kindly put at my disposal and we soon covered the twelve miles to Daventry, passing through the quaint villages of Flore and Weedon with their quaint old houses of thatched roofs and mellow russet-coloured bricks. 5XX, Daventry, 1562 metres, 192,000 watts, and 5GB, 491 metres, 610,000 watts, are quite close to each other on a low hill 600ft. above sea level. The T aerials are 500 feet high and well braced with staunch guys which are well insulated. In a gale the top sways over two feet from the perpendicular. Both buildings are simple and plain, brick structures. The dozen or so engineers in charge live on the premises, and have a billiard room and library for use in leisure time. At 3.40 the car was in readiness and after a hasty cup of tea I was driven to Rugby, 12 miles, and in one and a half hours Euston was reached at 6 p.m. It was a most interesting experience and I shall have lots to tell of the stations when I return. To-morrow evening I go to the B.B.C. at Savoy Hill, from 8.20 to 9.30 p.m. to hear a vaudeville programme being broadcast. It is not easy to get these passes, due to the fact that studio space is very limited in the present quarters. In three years time the B.B.C. will be housed in their new permanent quarters near Laugham Place where their largest studio will seat 1000 people."

Furniture Conveyance

A WELL-KNOWN resident of a northern town recently transferred his home to Auckland. He obtained alternative quotations for the transport of his furniture from the Railway Department, and from a well-known carrying firm. In a letter to the Department he admits his surprise when he learned that the railway charge (plus cartage to and from rail) was substantially cheaper.

The Department states that a strong impression exists that its charge for the conveyance of furniture is high. As a matter of fact, a recent reduction of 32 per cent. (more than 6s. in the £1) enables the railway to quote a particularly attractive price for this class of traffic.

In conclusion, I would like to state that I am quite in accord with your views that relay stations would meet the position here and elsewhere where similar trouble is experienced. If such stations can give a satisfactory service, then I think, as I stated in my first letter, that B stations should not be subsidised. But until the relay service is started, several of the B stations are providing a necessary service and should be paid for it.—J.L. (Hastings).

THE advent of Christmas marked the seventh year of broadcasting in England. In fact, it was on November 14, 1922, that the first B.B.C. programme was transmitted. That evening the announcer said that broadcast messages would be sent twice each night, at 6 and 9 p.m. The call sign would be 2LO, and the wavelength 360 metres. "And," comments the editor of "Popular Wireless," "I shall never forget how after the official announcement, he (the announcer) began a little talk by saying: 'You know, this broadcasting is going to be jolly good fun!'"

But wireless in England has not been "jolly good fun," but as that same editor remarks: "There is rather a lack of spontaneity, and a lack of that intimate comradely feeling which was so great a feature of the atmosphere of broadcasting when the old B.B.C. first began its duties," and adds:

"Perhaps aloofness is the keynote of the present atmosphere of broadcasting."

Suggesting a remedy, "Popular Wireless" makes the recommendation that the announcer be given more scope to

exercise his personality, perhaps in a joke, while reading the news bulletin, "and above all a little warmth."

During the six years of progress since 1922 the growth of the English broadcasting has been very rapid. From the very few officials in that year to the huge staff of to-day, from the small studio "decorated with soap boxes and suspended microphones" to the multiplicity of elaborate studios at Savoy Hill, the B.B.C. has advanced.

What the next six years will bring forth can only be a matter of speculation; certainly rapid advancement is assured, and that only through a little co-operation and a little warmth.

Australian Features

Coming features from the Sydney stations are announced as follows:—

January 24.

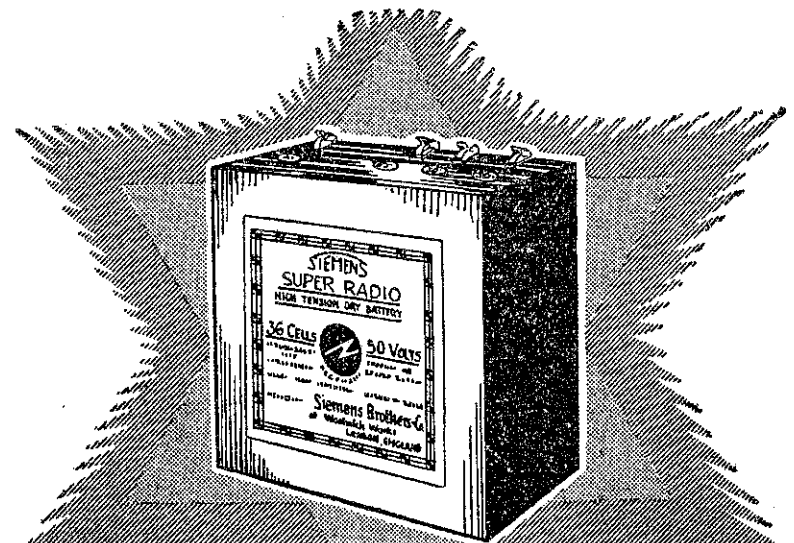
2FC, 8.37: Francis Hoban, pianist.
2BL, 8.15: The Blue and Gold Dandies Revue.

January 25.

2FC, 8.0: Prologue and incidental music from the Prince Edward Theatre.
2BL, 8.0: Savoyan Dance Band.

January 26.

2FC, 8.0: Radio Revue.
2BL, 8.0: The Kookaburra Saxophone Sextet.



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