

The Listener and the Service

Points of Interest from the General Manager's Mailbag

Varied Requests.

A HEAVY percentage of letters received by the company deal with requests for special items, either gramophone records or individual musical numbers. Wherever possible, such requests are acceded to, either at the time nominated by the listener or at the nearest appropriate occasion. "Would it be possible for you to put 'The Laughing Policeman' and the saxophone number 'Saxo-Phun,' by Rudy Wirodoft, on Saturday night any time after 8.30 p.m.?" was recently asked. In this case it was impossible to vary the programme already arranged for the evening in question, but the writer was advised that the numbers desired would be given on a succeeding Saturday afternoon.

Sometimes the requests for particular gramophone items clash with the nature of the programme being given on that particular evening. For instance, request was made that the item "I belong to Glasgow" should be given during a Sunday evening concert. This request was written to Auntie Pat on behalf of a certain regiment. Reply was made that, as the number in question was not entirely suitable for broadcasting on a Sunday evening, it could not be incorporated in that programme, but would be given during an afternoon session of a succeeding Wednesday.

Reception Problems.

NOT a few listeners write concerning their difficulties in reception. Some of these letters are addressed to the newspapers voicing complaint of outside interference. Christchurch recently suffered in this way, as well as Auckland. Complaints that are addressed to the Broadcasting Company

are acknowledged, and wherever possible, advice or other steps taken to correct the trouble.

Service for the Farmer.

SOME interest has recently been occasioned in the Canterbury provincial area by an experimental transmission of mid-day weather forecasts, this being introduced at the special re-

of Agriculture) be read by the announcer; (5) that time on certain days be set aside for items of interest for the women on the farm—cooking recipes, dress hints, and so on. On the above lines the session would be a real "farmers' news session," and I believe would be much appreciated. The weather reports as given at present are clear and easily taken down."

The daily mail-bag of the Radio Broadcasting Company of New Zealand is of huge dimensions. Enthusiastic listeners, who desire to secure from their sets the entertainment and culture that particularly appeals to them, continually direct to company headquarters an avalanche of requests. Effort is made to meet all that are possible. Every letter is given consideration and acknowledgement by the general manager. With the thought that some of the problems presented by this correspondence are of more than passing interest to the general body of listeners, it is intended from time to time to cite typical requests and measures taken in connection therewith. It is hoped that by this means a mutual understanding of broadcasting and programme problems will be developed to the general advantage of the service.

quest of those interested in the weather for harvest operations. Suggestions for the development of this mid-day service were forwarded by Mr. J. C. Gubb, of Puhua, Little River, who wrote suggesting: (1) That the session commence not later than 12.30 (while the farmer is in to lunch); (2) that all or most of jazz be omitted; (3) that dairy produce, meat, wool, and seeds market reports be given when available; (4) that short articles or items of interest from farmers' magazines (say, "New Zealand Dairy Produce Exporter," and Christmas number of same, "New Zealand Dairyman," or, better still, articles contributed or approved by officers of the Department

A detailed reply in acknowledgement promised consideration of the suggestions made when circumstances permitted a special farmers' service.

Subsidy to Musical Societies.

ANOTHER official listener expresses himself as follows concerning the suggested subsidy to musical societies:—"I cannot find one listener in favour of this. Irrespective of the standard of the performance, it is generally admitted that choral singing (with a large chorus) does not broadcast well. "The amateur orchestras usually suffer from the same or a similar weakness. They will not rehearse properly. Each performer learns his part at home fairly efficiently, but they cannot understand the great importance of tout ensemble playing and rehearsing. It is usually a case of "our Johnny is the only one in step!"

"The Aeolian Orchestra, who gave performances some time since from 1YA, were a notorious example of this, and their performances were a

standing joke in Auckland musical circles. They could only be described as awful, and were admitted to be so by some of their leading players.

"A subsidy might keep some of these weak associations afloat, but it would not improve their performances, and most of them were better sunk—apart from the pleasure they give themselves, and for which they must pay themselves!

"The 'Record' talks of encouraging good music. Unfortunately it would only encourage the amateur societies to wall on in the same old mediocre way. They are subject to the usual disabilities of all amateur organisations. They depend upon voluntary effort and subscriptions and the officials—however earnest they may be—cannot offend their own subscribers. The money, if available, would be infinitely better spent on a good professional orchestra, if the talent were procurable, and in the meantime—first-class records cannot be beaten, and you will soon find listeners coming round to this view."

In his reply the general manager stressed the fact that the company was anxious to further, to the utmost of its ability, the development of musical talent and appreciation in the Dominion and would fully consider the matter from that angle.

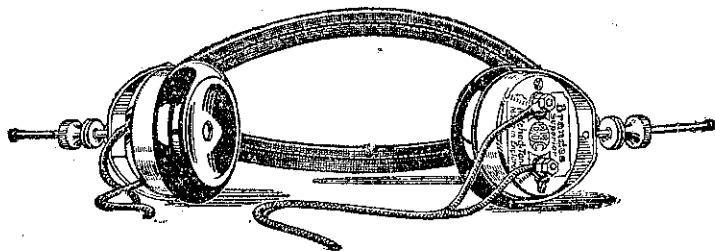
Preliminary Tuning Note.

TO a correspondent who suggested that a preliminary tuning note should be broadcast for the convenience of listeners, the general manager replied:

"We followed the practice of broadcasting a tuning note when 2YA was first opened, but have since discontinued it owing to the fact that apparently no useful purpose was being achieved. No difficulty should be experienced in tuning 2YA correctly, as the transmitting equipment operates on a frequency which is maintained constantly, and thus once the dial settings for 2YA have been obtained on the receiver, no further adjustment is required at any time."

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